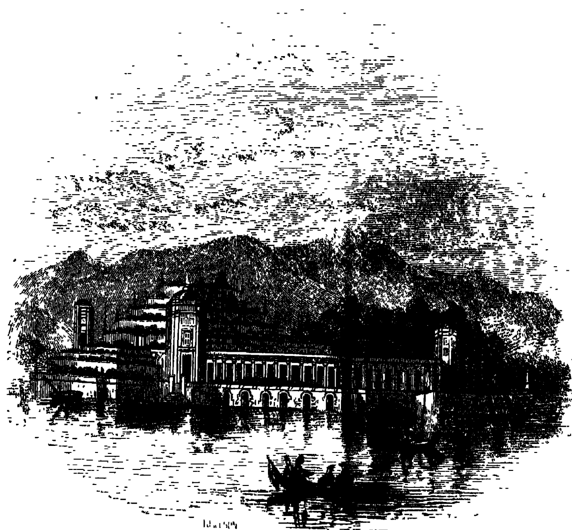
ITALY

AND

THE ITALIAN ISLANDS.

VOL. II.



ISOLA BELLA, IN THE LAGO MAGGIORE

OLIVER & BOYD, EDINBURGH.

ITALY

AND THE

ITALIAN ISLANDS,

FROM

THE EARLIEST AGES TO THE PRESENT TIME.

By WILLIAM SPALDING, Esq.
Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Edinburgh.

WITH ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD BY JACKSON, AND ILLUSTRATIVE MAPS AND PLANS ON STEEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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ITALY

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PART I.

ANCIENT ITALY.

CHAPTER X.

Illustrations of the Character, Literature, Topography, and Art, of early Christianity in Italy.

INTRODUCTION—Persecutions—Corruptions—ILLUSTRATIONS OF CHARACTER—The False Religion and the True—Symmachus and Ambrose—Ambrose and Theodosius—The Hermit Paulinus—Monachism—LITERATURE FROM CONSTANTINE TO ODOACER (A. D. 306—476):—Theology—*Heathen Writers*—Struggle of the old Faith—Ausonius—Claudian's Works—Symmachus—Ammianus—The Encyclopedists—*Christian Writers*—Lactantius—Latin Doctors—Sidonius—The Poems of Prudentius—TOPOGRAPHICAL ANTIQUITIES—*Apostolic History and Traditions*—Domine Quo Vadis—The Abbey of the Three Fountains—*The Catacombs*—Roman Catacombs—Their Graves—Inscriptions—Paintings and Sculptures—Furniture—Tokens of Martyrdom—Catacombs elsewhere—THE BASILICÆ—Their Origin—The Seven Churches of Rome—Their Architecture exemplified—The Basilica of Saint Peter—CHARACTERISTICS OF EARLY CHRISTIAN ART—Architecture—Paintings—Mosaics and Sculptures—Surviving Monuments.

WE have now traced the political revolutions of Italy till the fall of the Western Empire in the year of grace 476.

The literature, arts, and character of the nation have also been hastily sketched; but the picture represents these features in their Pagan aspect; and attention is now demanded by a new state of things which arose with Constantine's recognition of Christianity. The most important steps of that great measure took place in the year 324. The ancient Roman empire survived a century and a half longer; but it thenceforth occupied a position exceedingly different from that which it had formerly held. Those times resemble both the heathen period and the dark ages, and yet can scarcely be classed with either.

Under the early emperors, there had sprung up in Rome, in the midst of its imperial guilt and heathen idolatry, a religious sect of mean and despised men, whose moral system possessed a purity hitherto unimagined, and was founded on a faith contradicting alike the licentiousness of the mythological religion professed by the state, and the proud self-sufficiency of the philosophical theologians. Shielded by the divine favour, this small society grew and prospered, and its purifying influence gradually spread more and more widely. The rulers soon discovered the progress of the new opinions; and, in respect to this sect, the careless toleration of paganism was violated. While the bad emperors were incited by casual caprice or malicious counsels, some of the wise ones were alarmed by inaccurate notions as to the ulterior views of a community, whose brotherly co-operation and moral strength were so unlike to the vicious weakness of the civil government and its instruments. Persecution of the believers in Italy began as early at least as the reign of Nero, and was repeated at intervals till the death of Diocletian; but the prisons of the martyrs, and the amphitheatres in which they were brought out to die, became more successful schools of the true faith than if they had been converted into churches; and when Constantine ascended the throne, such was the prevalence of Christianity in the empire, that his conversion, whatever may have been the motives

which really prompted it, had all the effects of a step dictated by sound views of worldly policy.

But even before that time, the church had declined deeply both in doctrine and discipline; and the decay became still more lamentable in the unhappy period which followed. There were numerous good men, and a few who maintained in many points the purity of the gospel faith; but the ecclesiastical community at large was stained by increasing departure from evangelical truth, by an undue assumption of power on the part of the higher members of its government, by a worldly and arrogant temper in its priests, by a half-pagan splendour in its ceremonies, and (perhaps the worst fault of all) by an ascetic spirit, which led the clergy to encourage the growing inclination of devout laymen to seclude themselves from all the active duties of life.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CHARACTER.

No feature of the age is more interesting than the very natural struggle which ensued between the false religion and the true. Paganism was dead in spirit; but long after the time of Constantine, its dry bones were still adorned by the trappings of its mythology and ritual; and, especially in Italy, its temples yet stood to remind the people of its ancient glory. The pomp of the Christian rites, likewise, which already in some of their varied shapes rivalled the splendour of the heathen ceremonial, was less fully displayed in the west than in those Greek provinces that surrounded the imperial court; and in Rome national recollections and family pride concurred in supporting the image of the fallen worship. The people were partly heathen, partly Christian; the senate was also divided, the majority being pagans till the time of Theodosius; the priestly colleges of the ancient city were still maintained, and filled by the noblest Romans; and the Christian emperors themselves accepted the nominal dignity of Chief Pontiff.

The apostasy of Julian gave fresh force to the old party; and that prince restored to the senate-house of

Rome the altar and statue of Victory, which had stood in it during the heathen times, but had been removed by Constantine. Gratian abolished the sacerdotal colleges, and anew displaced from the senate-house the idolatrous altar and its rites. In the reign of Valentinian I. the question between the two religions was referred formally to the throne. A majority of the senate petitioned the emperor for the restoration of the altar of Victory; and the skilfully oratorical petition is still extant, in which their spokesman, the senator Symmachus, maintained the cause of the old faith. The rhetoric of the Roman was outweighed by the eloquence of a yet abler advocate, the celebrated Ambrosius, bishop of Milan, who, after a distinguished civil career, had devoted himself with heart and soul to the advancement of religion and the church. In the year 388, the great Theodosius, having replaced his co-emperor Valentinian on the throne of the West, entered Rome in triumph; the question as to the religion of the senate was debated in his presence; and a majority of the members declared in favour of Christianity. The heathen party were never again able to resist, either in the city or in the provinces; in 390 their worship was prohibited by imperial edicts; and early in the succeeding century its last trace in Italy had vanished. A few men of letters, whose faith is doubtful, may be classed as sceptics rather than pagan believers.

The zeal of the devout, and the facility with which the emperors yielded to the tide of feeling in favour of the church, gave to its ministers a wealth and consideration on which, in some cases, they founded claims not less arrogant than those of the proudest popes in the middle ages. But the power of the clergy was often exerted for purposes which did them honour. No priest of the age ranked higher than Ambrose, or better deserved his reputation; and his celebrated resistance to Theodosius is a fine example of conscientious firmness. The brave and wise emperor, in one of those fits of anger to which he sometimes gave way, had ordered a gene-

ral massacre of the inhabitants of Thessalonica for an offence committed there, highly disgraceful indeed to the perpetrators, but not participated by any considerable number of its citizens. Ambrose, on receiving intelligence of this cruel execution, addressed to the prince, who was then at Milan, a dignified remonstrance, warning him not to approach the altar of God until he had repented of his great crime. Theodosius expressed remorse, but immediately afterwards proceeded to attend divine service in the cathedral. The bishop met him in the porch, refused him admission, and called on him to do penance for his sin. He submitted, humbly declared his contrition in presence of the people, and solicited re-admission to the communion of the church, which was not granted till eight months had elapsed from his public humiliation.

After the incursions of the northern tribes had begun to spread misery and desolation over Italy and all the south of Europe, we see the ecclesiastics nobly active in succouring distress. One fact, taken from the unhappy time when Genseric and his Vandals plundered Rome, may be enough as an example. The invaders carried into Africa an immense number of Italian prisoners, who were there sold as slaves, the wives separated from their husbands, and mothers from their children. Paulinus, a native of Gaul, who having retired into Campania to lead a life of ascetic penitence, was then bishop of Nola, had, before the barbarians embarked their captives on the coast of Naples, employed every means in his power for procuring their liberation. After they had sailed, a widow came to him entreating him to rescue her only son. Paulinus crossed to Barbary, and, finding the master of the young man obstinate, offered himself as a slave in his stead. The youth was released; and the hermit-bishop worked as a gardener for the Vandal till his clerical rank was discovered; upon which Genseric dismissed him with strong expressions of regret.*

* Sancti Gregorii Magni Dialogorum, lib. iii. cap. i.

The mixed character which the Christian religion bore in those its earliest days of political existence, is best shown by circumstances, which one is grieved to know, regarding these very men, Ambrose and Paulinus. Both were partakers, the former an active agent, in some of the worst errors of their times. Both were zealous advocates of the monastic institutions; and their writings contain earnest recommendations of celibacy and religious retirement from the world. Ambrose is charged, and on too plausible grounds, with having been even accessory, in more than one instance, to the commission of an offence which very soon became universal in the church, that is, the invention of miracles. Jovinian, an Italian priest, contemporary with him, and violently persecuted both by him and Saint Jerome, deserves remembrance for having both at Rome and Milan publicly disputed against monkery. This was almost the only vigorous effort of the age against that dangerous system; and it is needless to add, that it proved quite unsuccessful.

LITERATURE FROM CONSTANTINE TO ODOACER:

A. D. 306—476.

If the Latin writings of this period were to be judged strictly on their literary merits, very few would be placed in a rank that could exempt them from absolute neglect. Even in theology, which was the grand study of the time, the Greeks kept the vantage ground on which the school of Alexandria had previously placed them; and the greatest names of the church continued to be found in the eastern quarter of the empire. But the Latin authors of this age have a twofold importance. The compositions of some among them form a branch of that literature, which was the first general effort of unfettered Christianity; and all of them constitute a link between the classical works and those of the middle ages. The spirit of letters and philosophy in this age, however, cannot be here more than scantily examined;

since a complete execution of the task would involve an analysis of most of the works composed by the fathers of the western church.

The Literature of the Heathens.

The old religion succeeded, till the fall of the empire, in maintaining a lodgement in the fancy of some literary men. We cannot indeed reckon these persons heathens as to worship, in the face of the Theodosian edicts; and we can scarcely account them pagan even in belief, when we read their cold mythology and speculation; but from the total absence of Christian imagery or feeling, we can without hesitation set down a few as at least not Christians. We find a very strange illustration of the perplexity of the times, in the relations which some of these men held to the state and the emperors; and the same principles are farther exemplified by the heathen tendencies which we shall discover even in Christian writers themselves.

No instance of this juxtaposition of the two religions can be more apt than that of the poet Decimus Magnus Ausonius, who closed a long life about the year 394. This man, the son of a physician in Bordeaux, and himself originally an eminent teacher of rhetoric there, was called by the cruel but able Valentinian I. to educate his son Gratian, and afterwards performed the same office for the emperor's younger son Valentinian II. Both his pupils ascended the throne, and the Gallic schoolmaster rose to be successively quæstor, prefect of Italy, prefect of Gaul, and consul, the highest of the honorary titles. He was also the friend and tutor of Paulinus of Nola, whose correspondence with him is still extant. He was the fashionable poet of his time, and Theodosius the Great wrote to him in his old age a letter, anxiously entreating him to continue the practice of composition. Gratian, his pupil, was, as we have seen, an orthodox believer, and Theodosius was a zealot; but the writings of Ausonius himself contain no traces of Christianity. While their form and decorations are scrupulously heathen, the

morality of some of them reflects no credit on paganism, and would utterly disgrace the disciple of a purer faith. Indeed, whatever may have been the poet's own creed, it is humiliating to know, that the disgusting obscenities of his most discreditable composition should have been compiled at the request of a Christian emperor, by one who was tutor to himself as well as to his elder and better brother. Another of his poems we could almost suppose to be meant as a profane piece of ridicule on the most awful of all mysteries.* In point of literary genius the works of Ausonius do very little honour to the times. His best effort, the descriptive poem on the river Moselle, derives great interest from its form, since it is perhaps the very oldest example of that class of poetry; but its real merit cannot be ranked high. Some of his other productions deserve more notice, from their excessive badness. One of them sets forth the mystical properties of the number Three, and is contained in three times thirty lines, to fit the subject.† In one poem every line ends with a word of one syllable;‡ in another, which the author himself seems to have admired exceedingly, every line begins with one monosyllabic word, and ends with another. These trifles are worth mentioning, because they anticipate the worst follies of monkish pedantry.

There is more pleasure in naming the poet who succeeded to the reputation of Ausonius, namely, Claudius Claudianus, an Egyptian by birth, who lived chiefly in Italy, and wrote in the reigns of Theodosius and Honorius, being patronised by the latter prince's celebrated but unfortunate general Stilicho. Claudian was honoured with a statue in Rome, and was the court laureate of the western empire till his patron's fall. He composed Panegyrics on the exploits of Honorius, and on those of Stilicho, with an Epithalamium for the emperor's

* Eidyllium vi: Cupido Cruci affixus.
† Eidyllium xi: Gryphus Ternarii Numeri.
‡ Eidyllium xii: Technopægnion.

marriage; and in all these works, their heroes, the enforcers of the Theodosian edicts against the idol-worship, are strangely placed under the patronage of the heathen divinities, beings who, according to the prevailing theology of the day, were believed to be nothing less than demons. The goddess Rome, terrified by the revolt of Gildo in Africa, flies to the threshold of Olympus, conjuring Jupiter to aid her, by the prophecies of the sibyls and by the auguries which attended the foundation of the city; the god breathes on her, and she recovers her pristine youth and warlike vigour.* Cupid watches roguishly the love-longings of Honorius, and brings Venus from Cyprus into the palace of Stilicho at Milan, to move the heart of the emperor's destined bride.† It is impossible to believe that such mythological ornaments conveyed as little meaning in the fourth century, as they do when they figure in rhymes of modern days. The fathers, indeed, do sometimes complain of the pagan writings of the age, and Claudian is styled by one of them "a most obstinate idolator;" but the wrath evaporates in idle words, and the poet retains his place at the Christian court. There cannot be a stronger proof how powerless literature had now become; for, had the poetry thus palpably heathen been considered as in the smallest degree dangerous, the clergy were both too zealous and too strong not to suppress it at once.

The literary merit of Claudian's works makes one sorrowful in reading them. It is melancholy to see a man whose genius was so truly poetical, struggling with the difficulties of a language corrupted alike in its structure and its prosody; it is melancholy to see him squandering his fancy in extolling the weak Honorius like a second Romulus; and it is sad, above all, to hear those exulting strains, pitched in a key that might have celebrated the conquests of Scipio, and yet composed while the barbarians were thundering at the gates of Italy. Much skill

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* De Bello Gildonico, v. 17-30; 202-212.

† Epithalamium Honorii Augusti et Mariæ.

is displayed in the treatment of the poet's themes. The greatness of Theodosius, scarcely cold in his grave, is brought boldly into the foreground; the glories of republican Rome are painted with a fond repetition, which lingers like an echo about to die away; and one poem, celebrating a victory not gained till the footsteps of the foreigners had marked the soil of the whole peninsula, has in it more of anxiety than triumph.* Claudian's verses, though often defective in taste, are full of rich fancy and ready thought; the feeling is sometimes exceedingly deep, the grouping frequently picturesque, and some pictures from life are wonderfully happy, and therefore deserving of peculiar notice in an age when literature in general was so painfully artificial. Of his sketches from nature, the finest is the beautiful and celebrated epigram on the Old Man of Verona, who had never gone beyond the suburbs of the city. There is much poetry in the Epithalamium of Honorius, especially the description of the enchanted garden of Cyprus, in which some of the allegoric imagery floats in an atmosphere truly lyrical.† Two of his longest and worst poems are invectives on Eutropius and Rufinus, the fallen enemies of his protector Stilicho; but even these contain original and very striking thoughts and descriptions, among which may be instanced the dream of the oppressor Rufinus on the night before his slaughter by the soldiery.‡ The ghosts of his murdered victims flit round his bed, like the spectres in Richard's vision on Bosworth Field, and the most distinct of the phantoms speaks to him. But the words are not, like those of Shakspeare's apparitions, words of terror: they contain an ambiguous prophecy, which tempts the tyrant next morning to commit himself into the hands of his murderers. Claudian's most elaborate work, and that which, amidst many faults, displays best his fancy and his power

* De Bello Getico; a poem which celebrates Stilicho's victory over Alaric at Pollentia, near Turin, in 403.

† Epithalamium, v. 49-86. ‡ In Rufinum, lib. ii. v. 324-335.

of vivid description, is the unfinished poem of the Rape of Proserpine. This composition, throughout most of its scenes, exhibits the worn-out Grecian mythology in an aspect of picturesque novelty, which would have done high honour to any age of the Roman literature. Take, as one example amongst many, the Wedding Feast in Hades.*

Avienus, a poet of the time of Theodosius, is not worth mentioning on the credit of his doubtful remains; and the versified Italian Itinerary of the Gaul, Rutilius Numatianus, written about 420, is of no value except to the antiquary.†

Of the heathen prose writers in Latin, few merit much notice. The most celebrated was the eloquent and learned Roman senator Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, the advocate of the old faith, who died about the beginning of the fifth century. A little earlier was Ammianus Marcellinus, a native of Antioch, who lived under Constantius and his successors, and wrote a blunt and manly Roman history, ending with the death of Valens, of which only eighteen books remain, embracing the period between the years 353 and 378. Two writers, who nearly resemble each other, both having composed compendiums of knowledge, deserve mention from the extensive use which was made of their works by the monks in the middle ages. The one is Aurelius Theodosius Macrobius, who probably lived under Theo-

* De Raptu Proserpinæ, lib. ii. v. 326-366.

† There would be some reason for doubting the heathenism of Rutilius, if the only ground for the opinion were that assigned by the historian of Italian literature. It is too curious not to be given. "He was an idolator, as is especially manifest from the bitter invective which he vents against the monks, who led a solitary and austere life in the island of Capraja." Tiraboschi, Storia, tom. ii. lib. iv. cap. 4. sect. 7. The lines alluded to, which are in the first book, v. 439-452, do not contain one syllable against Christianity, but only an indignant rebuke of the slothfulness and self-torture of the ascetics. If these lines make Rutilius an idolator, the honest and intrepid Jovinian, the victim of Jerome and Ambrose, was an idolator likewise. But his attack on the Sabbath (lib. i. v. 389, *et seq.*) is a much more unequivocal proof of his heathenism.

dosius and Honorius, and whose miscellany, called the "Saturnalia," is a fair specimen both of the knowledge and ignorance of the age. The other is Martianus Capella, whose "Saturicon," or "Marriage of Philology with Mercury," is now less known than the preceding, but was not less studied in the scholastic times, and is very curious both for its matter and for the fanciful vehicle in which its information is conveyed. Heathen deities and allegorical personages appear in a kind of drama, and make long speeches on the several branches of polite learning.

The Literature of the Christians.

In turning to the Christian writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, we must recollect that their religion had previously possessed a few advocates who had strong claims to notice even in a literary point of view. These, however, were almost without exception Greeks, educated in a school which was established, some say by Saint Mark, in the learned city of Alexandria. From this seminary emerged Clemens Alexandrinus, who travelled in Italy about the end of the second century or beginning of the third, and his famous scholar Origen, who preached long in Rome. To the theologians who flourished in the east, the best that the early Latin literature could oppose was Justin Martyr, who wrote his Apologies under the Antonines, and suffered at Rome in the reign of Marcus Aurelius After the accession of Constantine the great names of the empire were still found in the east.

Just before the time of that emperor, however, we meet in the Latin literature of Christendom with the conversion of Arnobius, the author of the argument "Contra Gentes," who was the teacher of a more able and eloquent writer, Cæcilius Lactantius Firmianus, the tutor of Constantine's unhappy son Crispus, and long styled the Christian Cicero. The work on which the reputation of Lactantius mainly rests, is his "Institutiones Divinæ," a treatise of Christian doctrine, addressed

to the Roman heathens, and designed, through its classical form and views, to satisfy their antique taste. Among the succeeding theological writers, whose influence on Italy gives them a claim to notice, Jovinian, the persecuted opponent of the ascetic life, has been already named. The advocates of the victorious system were more numerous and celebrated. Saint Jerome, a Dalmatian, studied at Rome about the middle of the fourth century, and afterwards taught there. Saint Augustin, an African, born in 354, was long a teacher of theology in that city and in Milan, and afterwards bishop of Hippo. Saint Ambrose, who died in 397, after having been first prefect and then bishop of Milan, was one of the most remarkable men of his times; and his writings, with those of the African doctor, exercised more influence than any others of their class on the modes of thinking throughout all the middle ages. Ambrose's works, the careless productions of one who united to a wonderful extent study with active business, are less remarkable in a merely literary view than those of Augustin, whose Moorish nature possessed much warmth and prompted a vehement eloquence. His great treatise "De Civitate Dei" expounds the nature of the kingdom of God, as opposed to that of this world; and his "Confessions" form one of the most interesting records of the history of a human mind. After such writers as these, the works of Leo the Great, who was Pope from 440 till 461, have scarcely any literary claim to criticism.

Leaving the divines, we find the historical literature of the Latins to consist in two meagre abridgments; that of Aurelius Victor, brought down nearly to the last years of Constantius, and that of Eutropius, dedicated to Valens. The jurisprudence of the age, exhibited in the Gregorian, Hermogenian, and Theodosian codes, is, as matter of literary remark, beyond our limits. Among the poets of the time, five or six names may have a place. Publius Optatianus Porphyrius composed, in 326, a poem, still extant, in praise of Constantine, the lines of which are acrostics; and this wretched form of

verse was in that age highly popular. Falconia Proba, a pious Roman lady of rank in the reign of Honorius, adapted to religious purposes another device, which Ausonius had prostituted to evil, fitting together different verses of Virgil into a composition which was called the "Centones Virgiliani," and contained a narrative of the Life of Christ. The poems and epistles of the generous priest Paulinus are not above the level of the age.

There still remain two poetical names of a higher order. They are those of Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, a Spaniard, born in 348, whose days were spent in Rome, and of Sidonius Apollinaris, bishop of Auvergne, the active period of whose life extended from about 450 till after the fall of the empire.

Sidonius scarcely falls within our plan, and might, with the sacred poets Juvencus, Sedulius, and Saint Prosper, be omitted altogether: his genius, at least, would not call for an exception in his favour. But he is nevertheless deserving of notice for two reasons; first, for the purpose of pointing out his obscure and affected epistles, as full of curious details, which explain the state of the Roman empire during the Germanic invasions; and, secondly, in order to indicate once more, in one who was a Christian bishop and the son-in-law of a Christian emperor, the strangest confusion of Christian with pagan imagery. The misapplied classicism of Sidonius is most lavishly bestowed in his panegyrics on the three emperors, Avitus his own father-in-law, Majorian, and Anthemius. The poem on the elevation of the first of these sovereigns to his ephemeral power, is far the most absurd. Jupiter summons the gods to Olympus; and Rome, terrified and trembling, presents herself in the celestial synod to pray for succour. The Thunderer describes to her the virtues of Avitus, and instals him as her champion.*

Prudentius, of whose life we know little except that it was spent in public business, and honoured with offices

* Carmen vii: Panegyricus Avito Augusto Socero Dictus, v. 17-51, &c.

of distinction, is a poet of a different and a loftier strain. His works have many of the faults common to all the literature of his age; its rhetorical declamation, its fondness for metaphysical discussion, its complicated dialectics, and its pugnacious tendency. But the poetical feeling, the spirit, and grace, of many passages, are worthy of a better time; and no Christian poet has more exquisitely expressed the humble warmth of devotion than Prudentius has in some of his best pieces. The devotional temper indeed scarcely ever deserts him: it breaks in upon his oratory and his logic like a moonbeam shining into a dungeon. The Catholic church has appreciated his worth, and made free use of his hymns in her worship.

These Hymns consist of two sets. The first and best is called the Cathemerinon, or Book for the Day, and contains nine lyrics for the various hours and employments: the Cock-Crowing, the Matin Hymn, two Hymns before and after Meat, the Hymn at Lighting the Lamp, the Hymn on Retiring to Rest, two Hymns for and after a Fast, and a Hymn for Every Hour. The collection is preceded by prefatory verses, which contain an affectingly humble self-review; and it is usually followed by three other pieces, the Hymns for Christmas and Epiphany, and that for the Burial of the Dead, which last would bear a comparison with most efforts of sacred lyrical poetry. The second and larger collection is entitled Περι Στεφανων, and contains fourteen Hymns on celebrated Martyrs. Several of these are tediously diffuse, and full of artificial and misplaced rhetoric; but in none of them is the warmly religious spirit wanting, and in some this holy influence, and the felicitous invention which is its frequent instrument, triumph over all faults and misconceptions. Among the very long pieces, the legend of Saint Romanus is by far the most pathetic; and the short hymn on the Saints Peter and Paul, with that on Saint Agnes, may be also pointed out. Another of Prudentius' poems, entitled the "Diptychon," or Tablet for the Altar, is

more in the low taste of his time than any of his others, and contains short summaries, in the manner of the Greek epigrams, of the chief events related in the Old and New Testaments.

The rest of his compositions are versified treatises of dogmatic theology; but even in these the genius of the poet often bursts its fetters. They consist, first, of Two Books in answer to the Oration of Symmachus for the altar of Victory, forming a work from which could be quoted some poetry of a very high order, buried amidst argument and declamation; and, secondly, of three other pieces which have some appearance of having been intended as parts of one controversial poem. The first of them, the "Apotheosis," is a defence of the orthodox doctrine of Christ's nature against the various heretics; the second, the "Hamartigenia," or Birth of Sin, is chiefly occupied with the same topic; and the "Psychomachia," or Battle of the Soul, which is the last, is an allegorical narrative in which the Christian Virtues are exhibited in combat with the Vices.

The Psychomachia, though not a work of the highest excellence, would deserve a more detailed analysis than the limits of these pages allow. It is the earliest Christian poem of the sort; and if we conceive its allegorical characters united to the dramatic action of the "Ludus Septem Sapientum" of Ausonius, in which the Seven Sages of Greece, preceded by a prologue, step successively forward and explain their several tenets, we have precisely the old Moralities, productions which, originating in the monasteries, formed the earliest dramatic entertainments of the middle ages. Much of the allegory in the Psychomachia is exceedingly pertinent and picturesque. Faith, naked and unarmed, treads on the neck of the old Idolatry; the maiden Chastity, glorying in the glory of the Holy Virgin, smites down Lust and hangs up his sword in the church; Pride, clothed in a lion's skin, rushes forward on an unbridled horse, and is slain by Patience; Luxury, with languid voice and swimming eyes, reclines in a gorgeous chariot, whence she scatters

violets and rose-leaves; while Avarice follows behind and gathers what falls from the car. In the midst of the contest, Hope, the comforter of the good, flies up to heaven, and the Virtues gaze disconsolately after her, longing to follow, but at length turn again cheerfully to their earthly fight. After slaying mankind in thousands, Avarice at last attacks the priests, in the moment they were leading the battle of the faith, but is opposed by the shield of armed Reason ;* whereupon the clergy escape with skin-wounds, and the fiend, assuming a new dress and calling herself Frugality, strives to mingle among the supporters of religion, but is strangled by Almsgiving, a personage who, once rich, has stripped himself of his very clothes to enlarge his charity. The Virtues at last, on a signal given by Concord, return to their tents in procession with hymns; and, on the suggestion of Faith, build in the centre of the camp a magnificent temple.

CHRISTIAN TOPOGRAPHICAL ANTIQUITIES.

The topographical antiquities of our religion in Italy till the fall of the empire, are involved in an obscurity which, originating in unavoidable causes, has been increased by an unwieldy mass of traditional inventions. But, amidst all their uncertainty, the legends of the saints and acts of the martyrs possess peculiar interest; and often, when they are most destitute of historical foundation, present lively illustrations of the authentic annals of the faith. They cannot be neglected by any one who studies the ancient Italian history, either on the spot or in his closet. There is no province of the country which does not possess a topography of Christian saints as well as of pagan heroes, and the churches are as rich in ecclesiastical reliques as the palaces in classical works of art.

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* ——— Gentis Levitidis una
Semper fida comes—
Psychomachia, v. 502, 503.

Apostolic History and Traditions.

In the present outline, it is impossible to do more than allude to some specimens of the most interesting scenes and most probable traditions; and these, with the greatest advantage, may be taken chiefly from Rome, where Christian monuments are not only more numerous than elsewhere, but have been subjected to a stricter scrutiny.

The Acts of the Apostles describe to us events which, though we should be unable to trace their localities more closely than the sacred volume details them, must inspire an interest exceeding all that heathen antiquity can claim. We follow St Paul, a Roman citizen, on his voyage as a prisoner to Italy; we accompany him to Syracuse in the Alexandrian ship, "whose sign was Castor and Pollux;" we pass with him to Rhegium, and again land at Puteoli; we see him, on his journey to Rome, met by the brethren at the Three Taverns, on the Appian Way; he enters the city by that street of tombs; our imagination conceives his long residence amidst the splendour and the classicism of the imperial metropolis, where he "dwelled two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the word;" and we still read those epistles to the churches which he composed during that period. We know, likewise, that he once more visited the capital in the reign of Nero, and that, having been arrested with other Christians in the persecution which was raised against them on the pretence of their having been the incendiaries of the city, he was executed in the year of grace 65 or 67, being indebted to his citizenship for no other privilege than that of being beheaded instead of suffering the death of the cross. Nor is there any sound reason for disbelieving the ecclesiastical historians, when they state, that Saint Peter also visited Rome, and there endured martyrdom; and the assertion that the two Apostles died in the same persecution, and on the same day, though not in the same place, has no inherent improbability, although it is not

by any means proved. We can also view in the eternal city the place where perished those bands of the faithful, whose blood, in the repeated persecutions, was spilt like water; we can conceive them in their secret assemblies for worship, and in their quiet discharge of all the duties of life; we can follow them to the squalid prison, and to the tribunals of the judges in the basilicæ; and we can imagine the amphitheatres of Rome, of Capua, or of Verona, crowded by the fierce heathens, convened to witness the lingering agonies and death inflicted on those of whom the world was not worthy. We can believe, moreover, that in the desolate plains around the city-walls, we may tread unknowingly on many a martyr's grave; and, among the numerous Christian tombs that have been excavated, we can behold the very spots in which lay the bodies of those, who either died for the faith, or were devoutly willing to do so.

But more is claimed of us than the payment of this light and pleasing tax upon our belief. The demands which are made on us are, in some instances, reasonable enough, at least, if not quite so well-grounded as to command unqualified compliance; in many other cases they cannot for a moment be listened to; and, almost every where, the localities which are pointed out have been transformed and disfigured in a way which, instead of strengthening belief, destroys even poetical illusion. It is perfectly natural that the primitive church should have piously preserved the memory of the spots where distinguished martyrs suffered, and of the graves in which their bodies were deposited by the faithful; but the reason is shocked, and becomes indisposed to yield assent even to plausible statements, when such assertions are presented to it as that which names the catacombs of Saint Sebastian alone as containing the tombs of 170,000 martyrs; and credence is rendered still more difficult by improbable narratives embracing the most trifling particulars, and by the exhibition of numberless and impossible reliques.

By reason of the accidents of situation, the mind is

nowhere left so much to its own emotions, as in the traditions regarding Saint Paul; and these, with some of those respecting Saint Peter, may suffice as specimens of the numerous apostolic legends, to which the Roman churches seek to give locality and detail.

We may be allowed to doubt as to the site of Paul's hired house, which is shown in the subterranean chapel of a church in the Campus Martius, and to reject altogether the story (not implicitly received even in Rome) which places the house of Paul's friends, Aquila and Priscilla, on the site of the very ancient church of S. Prisca, upon the summit of the Aventine; and we may also reluctantly scruple to believe that Peter and the apostle of the Gentiles were imprisoned in the Mamertine state-dungeon,—a tradition, however, which, like many others, has had the merit of preserving a valuable monument. The house in which St Peter, in the reign of Claudius, is said to have assisted St Mark in composing his gospel, now represented by the church of S. Pudentiana, near Santa Maria Maggiore, may pass with the picture of our Saviour left by the apostle at his departure, and preserved in the old church of S. Prassede, Pudentiana's sister and fellow-martyr. Even less notice is deserved by the apostle's chains in San Pietro in Vincoli, and scarcely more by the little chapel of San Giovanni in Oleo, at the Porta Latina, commemorating the immersion of the Evangelist John in a cauldron of boiling oil, from which he came out unhurt.* The little church called Domine Quo Vadis, in a hollow without the city, where a rural lane strikes off from the Appian Way towards the Grotto of Egeria, claims attention from the singularity of its tradition. The apostle, it is said, on the approach of his martyrdom, became affrighted, and fled from Rome southward early in the morning. He had proceeded no farther than the place where the church now stands, when, seeing the Saviour coming to meet him, he threw himself at his feet, and ex-

* Mosheim, Dissertationes, tom. i. p. 497-546.

claimed, Lord, whither goest thou (Domine Quo Vadis)? The Redeemer answered, I come to be crucified a second time. The apostle was penetrated by the rebuke, returned to the city, and submitted intrepidly to his fate.

There seems no reason for equal distrust in the main features of the legend as to St Paul's martyrdom and his grave, the localities of which are in themselves likely enough, and even derive some additional probability from the way in which the tradition connects these incidents with the death of St Peter. About three miles from the Gate of St Paul, on the heights which swell gradually from the left bank of the Tiber, in a solitary hollow among green hills, lies the spot anciently called Ad Aquas Salvias, which is said to have been the scene of the holy man's suffering. The beautiful seclusion of the region, surrounded in every quarter by the bare hilly downs, which are excavated in many spots into "dens and caves of the earth," similar to those in which the early Christians so often took refuge, inspires a feeling that is pleasingly consonant to the event, and is scarcely disturbed even by the tradition pointing to three fountains, as miraculously struck out by the saint's head, when it fell under the sword. These springs give to the three churches erected on the spot their modern name of the Abbadia alle Tre Fontane. All the three wells are enclosed in one of the churches (San Paolo alle Tre Fontane), and beside the first of them stands a marble column, to which, we are told, the apostle was bound when he was beheaded. From the second church (Santa Maria Scala Cœli), we enter the burying-ground named after the third, which is that of the Saints Zeno and Anastasius, where, says the legend, lie the bodies of full 10,000 martyrs, slain in this valley, after they had assisted in erecting the baths of Diocletian.* Descending the heights till we reach the brink of the Tiber, we arrive at the

* "From this spot to the basilica of St Paul, there formerly ran a subterranean passage, through which, on the festival of St Anastasius, the monks of St Paul's passed in procession to visit the burying-ground."—Beschreibung, vol. iii. part 1. p. 460.

ruins of the basilica of St Paul, which, we are told, contains the apostle's body, removed by the pious matron Saint Lucina, from its first place of interment in the catacombs, to this spot on her own grounds. The proximity of this church to the road leading towards Ostia, does little to remove that appearance of seclusion which it shares with the place of martyrdom.

The legends are obscure as to the disposal of the corpse of St Peter, but appear to state that, after having, like St Paul's, been deposited for a time in the catacombs, it was transferred to a cemetery on the Vatican Mount, where the basilica consecrated to his name was afterwards built. There is a positive schism as to the place of his crucifixion. One account fixes it on the striking height of the Janiculum, at the church of San Pietro in Montorio, where a beautiful little circular temple, erected by Bramante, marks the exact spot. Other opinions, more general and more probable, assign the martyrdom to a spot on the Vatican near that where his body was afterwards laid; or, in other words, to the Circus of Nero in his Vatican gardens, which Tacitus, in his account of that emperor's persecution of the Christians, expressly specifies as the place of their suffering.*

From the narratives of the ecclesiastical annalists or the legends of the martyrologists, might be gleaned a small authentic list of eminent persons, who suffered in or near Rome; including Ignatius, in the end of the first century, who was exposed to wild beasts in the amphitheatre; Justin Martyr, who was beheaded under Marcus Aurelius; Apollonius, a Roman senator, who is said, in the time of Commodus, to have defended Christianity in the senate; and Hippolytus, a Roman presbyter, who was torn by wild horses at Portus Trajanus, in the reign of Decius. All these martyrs are without any memorial; but ancient churches mark the supposed graves of two others; namely, Laurence, a deacon, who, in the reign of Valerian, is said to have been roasted alive; and Sebastian, an officer of

* Taciti Annal. lib. xv. cap. 44.

Diocletian's guard, who, having been shot with arrows, and having recovered, is reported to have been afterwards put to death in the reign of the same emperor. The legend of Laurence, and the animated hymn which the poet Prudentius consecrated to his memory, relate, that three days before his martyrdom, Sextus, bishop of Rome, had been slain in the catacombs.

The Catacombs.

We may now pass to these remarkable monuments. Almost all of them have been closed up, after having been examined and ransacked of their treasures; and the only catacombs usually visited by travellers, are a small portion of the vaults under the church of S. Sebastian, on the Appian Way, or, sometimes, an equally small part of those at San Lorenzo and S. Agnes. Plans of most of the discovered ranges have, however, been made, and their antiquities have been minutely described, and repeatedly engraved.*

These crypts consist of galleries dug under ground in the soft rock, which forms a thick stratum all over the Campagna; they extend in many places to an immense length, communicating with each other like the streets of a city, and, besides containing innumerable niches in the walls, open into many small chambers. In several of them two or more stories are found, one above another, connected by staircases. In the accessible portion of the catacombs of S. Sebastian, the galleries and apartments are of much more confined dimensions than in some of the others, as, for instance, those of San Lorenzo; but at many spots the passages are even lower and narrower than those contracted corridors which are commonly inspected.

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* Aringhi, Roma Subterranea; Roma, 1651; 2 tom. fol. containing, with additions, the researches made by Bosio, the discoverer of most of the catacombs, and first published in 1632. Also Bottari; Pitture e Sculture Sacre estratte dai cimiterj di Roma, 1737-54; 3 tom. fol. Bosio's adventures, as related by himself and his successors, scarcely yield in interest to those of the explorers in the pyramids.

The origin of these, as well as of similar monuments, has been keenly disputed. The excavations in which they began must clearly have been made, like so many modern ones in all parts of the Roman plain, for the purpose of digging out the pozzuolana or volcanic earth, used by builders in forming cement. The legends, indeed, state the Christian prisoners to have been employed in many of these operations, and especially in quarrying the materials for the baths of Diocletian. It has been said, that in most places, the passages follow the veins of the pozzuolana; and if this be true, these cement-quarries may account even for most of the perplexed and winding galleries. The first occupation of the deserted caverns as burial-places, has been traced, with some plausibility, to the heathens, who are said to have thrown the corpses of slaves and malefactors into the arenariæ or sand-pits; but they were very early used as cemeteries by the Christians, who probably at first interred in them no other bodies but those of the martyrs, which, according to the ecclesiastical historians, it was often necessary to conceal from the heathen government. On account of the veneration with which such graves were regarded, it naturally followed that other converts desired to be buried near them; and thus the catacombs soon contained extensive ranges of Christian sepulchres. The devout, as St Jerome relates, were in the habit of visiting on the Sabbath the tombs of the martyrs in these crypts; and he forcibly describes the awe with which their gloom and their religious associations struck himself, on the visits he paid them while a student at Rome. They are also said to have served as the dwellings of the believers during the persecutions; and this is extremely probable, to the extent of their having been temporary places of refuge, though the assertion does not admit of being carried much farther.

Bosio, who spent a lifetime among the catacombs, and discovered several cemeteries previously unknown, describes many separate ranges, all situated without the walls of the city, and forming a chain round its whole

circuit. The people, and the lay-brothers of convents to which catacombs are attached, speak of a general communication between all, and allege that the range of S. Sebastian reaches to Ostia. Such stories are palpably extravagant; but the dimensions of those parts which Bosio measured (and beyond which there extend, in every one of the cemeteries, galleries choked up and inaccessible), are in reality striking enough, the passages being many miles in length.

The Catacombs of S. Sebastian, which have always been known, and have from very early times been called the Cemetery of Calixtus, are approachable only for a space, nearly triangular, of about 100 English feet each way. But beyond the modern walls, which prevent farther progress, lies an immense labyrinth of galleries in two tiers, of which the upper, according to Bosio's plan, extends about 1000 feet by 650, and the lower 550 feet by 400. Chambers opening into these corridors are found in every quarter, and are far more numerous than in any of the other cemeteries. The range which comes nearest in extent to these was discovered by the same explorer in 1618, near the right bank of the river, at a little distance from the ancient Porta Portuensis. The galleries measured by him cover an area of about 900 feet by 650. He considered this burial-place as being that which the martyrologists call the Cemetery of Pontianus, or Ad Ursum Pileatum in Via Portuensi, or that of the Saints Abdon and Sennen, whose figures, identified by their names and their oriental costumes, were found by him in a painting on the walls.* A third extensive range is accessible from the ancient church of St Agnes on the Via Nomentana, built by Constantia, the daughter of Constantine the Great, in honour of that virgin-martyr. The Catacombs of St Agnes have in one place fallen in, and a smaller part of them is thus separated by a wide interval from the larger, which in Bosio's

* See Aringhi, vol. i. plate iii. of this cemetery. Our countryman, William of Malmesbury, says a church was erected to these unknown eastern saints on the site of the cemetery of Pontianus.

time extended about 550 feet by 500. In 1594 he discovered another great range, into which he made himself be lowered by ropes, at a shaft close to the ruin called the Tor Pignattara, on the Via Labicana, three miles from the Porta Maggiore (Esquilina). He rightly recognised the ruin as the Mausoleum of Helena, the mother of Constantine,* and considered the crypts as the Cemetery of the Saints Marcellinus and Petrus (Exorcista), who are said to have had a church on the spot. The subterranean galleries, in one part of which very many sepulchral chambers are clustered together, extend, so far as measured, over a space of 500 feet by more than 400. The other catacombs of which Aringhi's work gives plans, are much smaller, and some of them extremely confined; but those of S. Cyriaca, beneath the church of San Lorenzo, not measured by the old writers, must be little inferior in extent to those whose measurements have been already given.

The cemetery of Pope Calixtus was probably that which was first used by the Christians as a general burying-place; and it hence received, by way of eminence, the appellation of the Cœmeterium ad Catacumbas. This bishop's incumbency falls under the reign of Alexander Severus; and the circumstances of the church at that time, with the fact that the legend of Calixtus places his martyrdom and grave at the catacombs of Callepodius (still extant at the church of San Pancrazio on the Janiculum), make it not unlikely that the reference to his age is correct.† In other vaults, however, some older inscriptions have been found, one

* The Sarcophagus of our countrywoman Helena was taken from her tomb in 1153, and is now in the Vatican, beside the coffin of her daughter Constantia, removed about 1260 from her mausoleum near the church of her favourite saint Agnes. Mus. Pio-Clem. Sala a Croce Greca, No. 45 and No. 46. Both sarcophagi are of porphyry. Helena's is sculptured with spirited reliefs of warriors on horseback and prisoners: Constantia's with indifferent groups of children gathering and pressing grapes, with peacocks and other Christian symbols.

† See Röstell's remarks in the Beschreibung, vol. i. book iii.

of which, perhaps Christian, gives the year of our era 111.* After the cessation of the persecutions, the catacombs were unquestionably extended by the formation of new passages, many of which are regular and extensive, and quite unlike the older caverns.

In the side-walls of the galleries we see the graves, which are long quadrilateral apertures, cut horizontally in the tufo and shut up by slabs of marble, bricks, or baked earth. Their small size is no doubt puzzling; but, as bodies have been found in many of them, their purpose cannot be questioned. A few are crowned by an arch overhanging them; and such vaulted recesses are still more frequent in the chambers already mentioned, many of which are also supported by thick pillars, and adorned with coved and painted roofs. Tradition makes these apartments to be chapels, and the arched niches to be the altars and graves of the martyrs; while it also points to one or two springs of clear water, and founds on their occurrence the assertion of innumerable baptisms, performed in the vaults by Peter and his successors. But there is more probability in the opinion, which considers the chambers as family sepulchres.† The museums of Rome, particularly that of the Vatican, abound in inscriptions taken from these recesses and galleries, which, with the paintings of the vaulted roofs, form most interesting illustrations of early Christianity, though many of them also indicate clearly its advancing corruption.

The inscriptions, chiefly in Latin, which is often misspelt or ungrammatical, and occasionally written in Greek characters, are generally simple, and in some cases extremely affecting. A parent briefly names the age of his beloved child, or a husband that of his wife, and the years of their wedded life; or the epitaph adds a prayer that the dead may rest in peace, annexing some rudely-

* Servilia. Annorum xiii. Pis. et Bol. Coss. Found in the catacombs of S. Lucina, near the Via Ostiensis.

† Beschreibung, vol. i. p. 382. Montfaucon, Diarium Italicum, p. 118. Mabillon, Museum Italicum, tom. i. part. i. p. 114.

carved emblem of the believer's hope and immortality.* Some of the sepulchral tablets have been taken from older tombs, and contain a heathen inscription on one side, and a Christian one on the other.

The representations on the early Christian monuments are exceedingly interesting, and important as illustrations of ecclesiastical history. In this view, their date is of great consequence. Probably very few of the paintings, and certainly not one of the sarcophagi, are older than the reign of Constantine. Many again are clearly works of the dark ages; but a large proportion belong to the times between Constantine and Odoacer.

The religious application of statuary and painting, firmly opposed by the fathers of the Eastern church, was favoured in Italy. There remain, it is true, very few sculptures, except the reliefs of sarcophagi and sepulchral tablets, but these are exceedingly numerous; and paintings and mosaics became universal in the churches and the subterranean cemeteries. The following are the principal subjects of these representations, so far as they can be probably referred to the fourth and fifth centuries.

We find on Christian monuments, not of very early date, a few scenes of the heathen mythology, such as Orpheus and the Bacchic orgies. But most of the themes are taken from the imagery or the history of the Old and New Testaments; and in many instances, where an allegorical subject can be identified, the sym-

* A very few specimens may be extracted, mistakes and all.

Merenti parentes fecerunt Leopardeti puelle virgini, que vixet anis xvii. et dies ii. In Pace.

Ilara, iiii. Idus Octobres defucta es in pace.

Geminæ Conjugi Severus, quæ vixit annos xx. menses ii. quæ fecit cum marito ann. ii.

Karito, qui vixit annos quaracinta, bono marito, bone memorie, qui fecit mecu annos viginti. Ossa tua bene requiescant.

Locus Valentini Præsb.

Cubiculum Domitiani.

Hilara dulcissima, An. P L M. xxxv. dep. in pace.

An interesting collection of Christian inscriptions is in the Galleria Lapidaria of the Vatican.

bolical allusion is just and striking, though in some representations it is a mere conceit. Among the most frequent of those which may be considered as simply historical, are the following: Adam and Eve at the tree of knowledge; Moses receiving the tables of the law; the adoration of the Magi; Christ in the midst of the apostles, and often figured as standing on a rock, from which flow the four rivers of Paradise; the resurrection of Lazarus, a very favourite subject; Christ's entry into Jerusalem, and the judgment-seat of Pilate; several of the Redeemer's miracles, of which the most common is that of the marriage at Cana. Perhaps some, even of these topics, are chosen as emblematic references to the grave and that which is beyond it, and to the mysteries of the Christian faith. In others, both from the sacred history and the parables, the symbolical import is too clear to be mistaken. Among these the most frequent are, the Good Shepherd carrying the lost sheep; Jonah swallowed by the whale (represented as a dragon), or sitting under the gourd; Daniel in the lion's den; Job in his affliction; the three children in the furnace; Moses taking his shoes from his feet, striking the rock, or receiving the manna; Abraham offering up Isaac; and Noah looking out from the ark.

At what time representations of the godhead first appeared on Christian monuments, is an interesting question, the answer to which can be but an approximation to the truth. The Holy Spirit, as the descending dove at the baptism of Jesus, is seen in at least one painting, which is probably not later than the fifth century; and there is perhaps only one figure of the Father (in a bas-relief of the offerings of Cain and Abel, on a sarcophagus) which can be referred to so early a date. Our Saviour, in his humanity, is frequently represented, but nowhere in his exaltation till much later; and it is especially worthy of remark, that the scene of the crucifixion was long reverently avoided. If we suppose the oldest figures of the crucifix to be as ancient as the sixth century, we probably overstate their

antiquity. To the same age, at the earliest, belongs the portraiture of the Virgin and Child, as a separate group, unconnected with the scriptural narratives.

Detached symbols are numerous, as ornaments on reliefs and paintings, or as additions to inscriptions; but the subjects are not very varied. The chief are the following: The dove, with or without the olive-branch; the fish, a very common figure, whose meaning is partly emblematical of baptism, and partly a kind of punning allusion from its Greek name to a designation of Christ;* the lamb, the vine, the palm, and the garland; the cock from the history of St Peter; the anchor, the ship, and the peacock, far-fetched images, which are most common on the later monuments. The monogram of the name of Christ, formed by entwining the Greek letters X and P, is extremely common; and in one monumental tablet, a dead child stands embracing the sacred symbol.†

In the niches and sarcophagi have been found rings, coins, vases of ointment, toys in children's tombs, lamps in the passages and chambers, and in many graves earthen flasks, of glass or terra-cotta. Those flasks that contain a red sediment like blood have occasioned much discussion, since these and the symbol of the palm have been declared by the Catholic church to mark the sepulchres of martyrs. This decision seems to be quite groundless. The palm may be otherwise explained; and to the many convincing arguments, which are currently adduced against the orthodox interpretation of the "Vas sanguinis," it may be added, that the coloured flask has

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* The word ιχθυς is composed of the initial letters of Ιησους Χριστος Θεου υιος σωτηρ.

† From the catacombs of the Via Salara, called those of S. Priscilla. The inscription is the following, and fixes the date to A. D. 335.

Miræ innocentiæ ac sapientiæ
puero Marciano, qui vixit ann. IIII. et
menses IIII. dies II. Quiescet in pace.
D. prid. Kal. Dec. Arbetione et Loll. Coss.
Parentes Fecerunt.

been found in the graves of many infants.* Neither are these vessels lamps or lacrymatories; but it is not so easy to say what they really are. According to one ingenious opinion, which is far from being improbable, they contain the wine of the sacrament, which, we know from the remonstrances of the fathers, it was an early abuse to administer to the dead.

Besides the Roman catacombs, there are several other excavations of the same kind. In Italy we find them at Naples and Salerno, in Sicily at Syracuse and at Marsala; though none of these cemeteries have been examined so carefully as those of Rome. At Naples four ranges have been discovered, the most extensive of which take their name from Saint Januarius or Gennaro. These differ extremely from the Roman vaults, being cut in the hard rock, and presenting wide, lofty, arched galleries, which the softness of the Roman tufo could not have supported. The catacombs of Syracuse, like the Neapolitan, have wide and lofty passages, and are hewn in the rock; but they are still more extensive, and, from the preservation of the paintings, offer a much more lively representation of early antiquity than the grottos of Rome. The entrance is near a subterranean crypt, which is said to be the sepulchre of S. Marcian, a martyr of the apostolic age. The part which is accessible consists of two stories, the undermost of which has one principal gallery about ten feet high, and as broad as an ordinary Sicilian street. On each side are deep recesses with arched roofs, some of which have had gates and locks; and from numerous points there run off cross lanes, chiefly at right angles, and communicating with others parallel to the main one, or with

* The Roman martyrology, however, does boast of at least one infant-martyr, the child who publicly confessed Christianity, and was beheaded with Saint Romanus at Antioch, A. D. 303. See Ruinart Acta Martyrum Sincera et Selecta, 1713, p. 360. The fact is related by Prudentius in his very beautiful hymn on the martyrdom of Saint Romanus; and few things can be more pathetic than his picture of the pious child carried to the place of execution in his mother's bosom.

spacious halls and squares. Bell-shaped apertures, like those which, chiefly blocked up, are found in the Roman catacombs, ventilate the galleries. The walls are stuccoed and painted, chiefly on a vermillion ground, with subjects resembling those that have been enumerated from the cemeteries of Rome, to which they have not yielded in their wealth of reliques.*

THE BASILICÆ.

Immediately on the conversion of Constantine Italy began to be covered with churches, built with all the skill that the times afforded, and adorned with all the pomp which could be supplied by the plunder of heathen monuments. Many idolatrous fanes were transformed into Christian places of worship; but where new structures were erected, the ecclesiastical architecture anxiously avoided the heathen forms of temples, and framed itself on the model of those buildings which, under the title of Basilicæ, served at once, as we have seen, the purposes of tribunals and of an exchange. The name thus introduced into Christian art has been long confined to seven churches in Rome, which, corresponding to the number of the primitive deacons, and to other points in the ecclesiastical discipline of the city, hold a kind of metropolitan rank. These seven Basilicæ, all said to have been founded by Constantine, are, Saint Peter's, Saint John Lateran, Santa Maria Maggiore, and Santa Croce in Gierusalemme, within the city, with San Paolo, San Sebastiano, and San Lorenzo, beyond the walls. The emperor's basilicæ, however, have entirely disappeared, and none of the edifices which represent them retain much of their original character, which we must seek in old descriptions, or may gather in most particulars from some ancient Roman churches of less

* Hughes' Travels, vol. i. chap. iii. 1820. Plan of the Syracusan Catacombs in Wilkins' Magna Græcia. Plan of the Neapolitan in D'Agincourt, Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens; Planche 9, Architecture et Sculpture.

note, especially San Clemente, which is essentially an antique building of this kind.

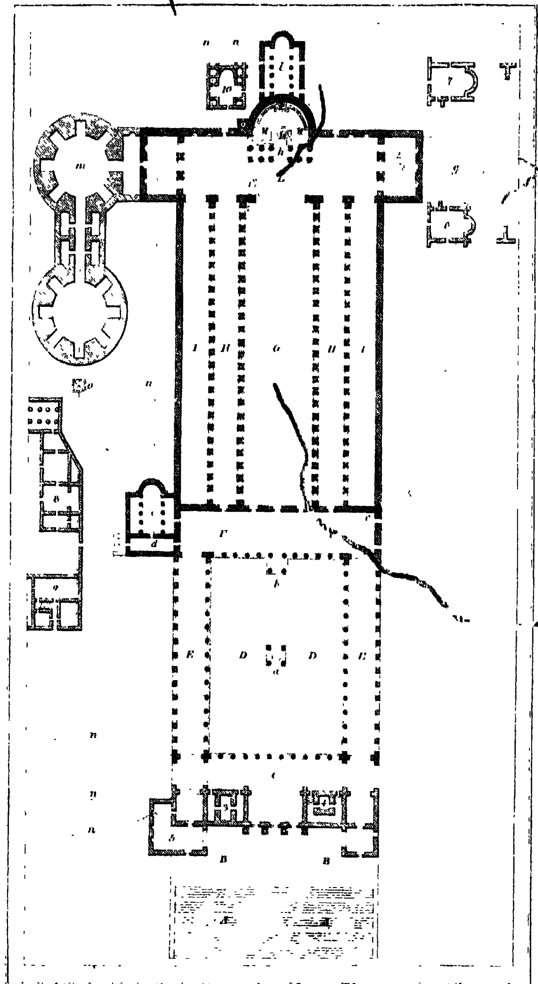
In front of the ancient basilica was an Atrium or court, often called the Paradisos, which is preserved in its early shape at the church last named, being an oblong square enclosed by a wall, round the interior of which runs a covered cloister, formed between the wall and an internal range of columns and pillars. In the middle of the area stood a fountain for washing the hands; and the court was appropriated to the lowest class of penitents, who were not permitted to enter the church. The atrium was also for some time the burial-place of distinguished persons, interment in the interior of the building being long reserved for saints and martyrs. Immediately in front of the church stood a portico, which still exists in its original form at San Lorenzo. The heathen basilica was an oblong structure with colonnades in the interior; in the covered walks, between the columns and the walls, shops were erected; business was transacted there and in the open space in the centre; and the courts of justice occupied one of the ends. The Christian architecture adopted these forms and divisions, with scarcely any alteration, except placing a roof over the central area. The body of the church was in most of these basilicæ divided by two rows of columns, into a nave and two side aisles, and, in some of the larger, into a nave and four aisles by four rows. At the extremity was the chancel, ending in a semicircle, and sometimes called the Apsis; but most frequently the Tribune, from the seat of justice in the pagan buildings. Some basilicæ, however, had transepts (cruces), which, in the oldest plan, did not form the building into a cross, but, being placed quite at one end, made it (excluding the curve of the tribune) resemble the letter T. In those churches which had transepts the nave ended, at the extremity nearest the tribune, in an arch, called the Arcus Triumphalis, which was a favourite place for mosaics and other ornaments. The nave and aisles were always separated by columns, never by pillars;

and those enclosing the nave supported two high side walls, which contained the windows, and over which was a wooden roof covering the nave alone, while the aisles on each flank were lower, and had separate roofs. The rafters and beams were invariably left visible; and the flat or vaulted roofs of some old churches are all of later times. There were no belfries till the seventh century.

The basilicæ were divided in their length into three parts; the nave being partitioned into the Narthex and Aula, and the semicircular tribune forming the Sanctuarium or Presbyterium. The narthex was nearest the door, and was assigned to the catechumens, the lesser penitents, and others not belonging to the ecclesiastical community. The aula was for the members of the congregation, the men being arranged on one side, the women on the other; though in some churches which, like that of S. Agnes, have an upper row of columns in the naves, the females were placed in galleries. These old divisions have long ago disappeared. The choir occupied that end of the nave at which it joins the tribune, a position which it still holds in the church of S. Clement. The gospel and epistles were read from the choir, which sometimes, as in San Clemente, San Lorenzo, and Santa Maria in Cosmedin, contains for that purpose two pulpits (Ambones), one at each side, but more usually one pulpit only, with two desks, a higher for the gospel and a lower for the epistle. In the tribune the bishop's chair occupied the middle point, close to the wall, now assigned to the high altar; and the altar (for in the original basilicæ there was only one) stood detached in front of the chair, as in the modern S. Peter's.*

The preceding outline affords materials for a curious comparison between the modern and the ancient Italian churches. It will be well to explain it here by an example, for which we may select the original basilica of S. Peter, a building strikingly different from that which now bears the name. S. Peter's, it must be

* See Burton's Antiquities of Rome, vol. ii. "Basilica;" and Platner in the Beschreibung, vol. i. part 1.



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remembered, was not in the time of the first Christian emperor the metropolitan church of the papal city. That rank was long held by the church of S. John Lateran, occupying a part of that splendid palace which had belonged to the family of the Laterani, and was given by Constantine as the residence of the Roman bishops. Of the old Lateran basilica we have neither any remains nor an exact description. But of the old S. Peter's, taken down to make room for the modern church, there are full accounts and accurate drawings; and though the building had during the middle ages suffered many alterations, and was very unlike what it had been at its erection, there yet exist scattered records, which have been ingeniously used so as to give a plan of the old church, representing with sufficient exactness its state at Charlemagne's coronation in 800. We may easily understand also its appearance before Odoacer.*

The church stood on an eminence, and was approached by the flight of steps A, leading up to a terrace B, beyond which was the atrium D, surrounded on all its four sides by a portico. In the eighth century the front portico C, was shut in by walls, a chapel, a belfry, and a lodge or triclinium; but originally its face towards the staircase seems to have been a simple colonnade. The side porticos E, E, were formed by a double colonnade, and the back portico F, by a colonnade and the front wall of the church. The centre of the atrium was occupied by a fountain *a*; and the famous bronze pine-apple from Hadrian's mausoleum stood at one time in this

* The plan, the first attempt of the sort, is given in the Beschreibung, and fully illustrated by Bunsen, its author. The annexed sketch is taken from his, but also exhibits, darkly shaded, and referred to by letters, all those parts and appendages of the Basilica which are demonstrably older than the year 500. The lighter parts date between 500 and 800, and are marked by numerals. The basilican architecture will likewise receive some illustration from the plan of the Florentine church Santo Spirito, to be found in a plate of the preceding volume at page 187. This fine building, planned by the celebrated Brunelleschi, though not completed till 1470, is in principle a basilica. It is a Latin cross, divided by two colonnades into three naves.

court, either in place of the fountain or along with it, perhaps at *b*. The atrium and its porticos became a royal cemetery, which, before 476, contained the bones of at least one emperor (Valentinian II.), and afterwards those of several other princes, including two royal pilgrims from our island, namely, Cedwalla king of the West Saxons, and Offa king of the East Saxons. At one end of the back portico F, was the sacristy *c*, which, with its vestibule *d*, and the portico F, became after the time of Leo the Great (buried in *d*) the usual cemetery of the popes.

The church, whose front was adorned with mosaics, probably by Pope Simplicius, near the end of the fifth century, was entered, like other basilicæ with five naves, by three doors leading into the middle nave, and one leading into each of the inner aisles. The Porta Santa at *e*, was an addition of the middle ages. The ninety-six plundered columns of the interior, disposed in four rows, and the walls, which rested on the architraves of the columns, divided the church into the nave G, the two inner aisles H, H, and the two outer aisles I, I. The nave at its upper end terminated in the triumphal arch, supported by two single columns; and mosaics adorned not only this arch, but the vault of the tribune, and many parts of the walls. The choir may be supposed to have been at L, beyond the arch of the nave, and as being shut in by a balustrade, and containing the pulpit *f*. The baptismal font, which in the middle ages stood at the extremity of one of the transepts, was at first contained in a separate vaulted chapel built in the fourth century by Pope Damasus, which was probably situated at *g*, beyond the end of the same transept. The richest part of the church was the tribune M, M, before whose curve stood a double row of twisted columns, said to have been erected by Constantine.* In the colonnade thus formed was the staircase *h*, leading down to the "Confession," in which was deposited the body of St Peter, beneath the high altar *i*.

* They are represented by Raffaelle in his Cartoon of the Healing in the Temple.

In the middle of the semi-circle of the tribune was the bishop's throne *k*; and seats for the other ecclesiastics lined the remainder of the curve. Steps conducted to the raised platform on which the altar stood, and a second flight led up to the episcopal chair.*

Of the buildings attached to the church, the most ancient was *l*, the sepulchral chapel of the consul and prefect Probus, a member of the celebrated Anician family, and eulogized both by Claudian and Ausonius. He died in 395, and, with his wife Falconia Proba, already mentioned as a literary aspirant, was buried here, on a spot included in the site of the Christian cemetery of the Vatican. Beyond one end of the transept, at *m*, where a circular chapel was erected in the eighth century, were interred the unfortunate Emperor Honorius and his first and second wives, the daughters of the brave Stilicho. The remains of the empresses were found in 1544, in coffins gorgeously adorned.

The dotted lines *n*, *n*, indicate the foundations of part of Nero's circus, the obelisk of which stood at the place *o*, now enclosed in the sacristy.

Before the year 800, when Charlemagne was crowned in the Basilica, it had received the following additions: eight new altars, a baptistery in the transept (2), a wall in front of the atrium in place of the colonnade, the belfry (3) built by Pope Hadrian I., the triclinium or lodge (4) of Leo III., the attached church (5) of S. Apollinaris, and a deanery (6). Monasteries and hospices were also added. In 440 Leo I. built the monastery of SS. John and Paul (7); Stephen II. founded the monastery of Jerusalem (8), to which were annexed a hospice (9), a church, and burial-ground; Leo III. built the monastery

* The chief dimensions of the building (as given by Bunsen from the Vatican MSS.) are, in English feet, the following:—Atrium: length, 186; breadth, 145. Church: length of the interior, from the main door to the wall of the tribune, 383; breadth of the interior without the transepts, 206; breadth with the transepts, 283; height of the nave and transepts, 123; height of the inner aisles, 59; height of the outer aisles, 44; height of the columns of the nave, 29; height of the columns of the aisles, 19.

of S. Martin (10); and beyond the old Christian cemetery, and not represented in the sketch, were the extensive convent and hospice of S. Stephen.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EARLY CHRISTIAN ART.

Of ecclesiastical architecture under Constantine and his successors, we must judge from ancient descriptions, from very scanty remains, and from a comparison with the existing secular buildings. The low merit of the civil architecture has already been spoken of; the exaggerated praises of sacred edifices, by admiring poets or Christian doctors, proceed from persons who were not only unqualified to judge, but were dazzled by glitter of ornaments, and impressed by devotional associations; and the few specimens that can be traced in parts of some old Italian churches, concur in confirming the sentence which condemns the art as all but totally worthless.

The want of mechanical skill, as well as of judgment, was instanced in the picturesque old basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura, which was erected about 389, and, after various transformations, was burned to the ground in 1823. Of its ancient columns, some were the remnants of fine classical buildings, others were coarsely cut shafts, with capitals and other ornaments moulded in stucco; and in the descriptions of the old S. Peter's, we find the columns there to have been of all orders, and even of all sizes, some being sunk in the ground, and others raised by pedestals above it. Of violations of symmetrical rules, the details already given as to the proportions of this church afford striking examples; such as the lowness of the columns, compared with the height of the superincumbent walls of the nave. But, amidst all the defects of the basilicæ, they possessed not only originality of invention, but often very fine feeling in the adaptation of their forms to the sentiments of Catholic belief and worship; and we must always recollect, that their arrangements contain the germs of all later ecclesiastical architecture.

The paintings, mosaics, and sculptures, of the fourth

and fifth centuries, possess higher intrinsic merit. The carelessness with which genuine Christian antiquities have been treated by the public bodies in Rome, has reduced us (with the exception of a very few illuminated manuscripts, some partially restored mosaics and paintings in old churches, and the small but interesting collection of reliefs, vases, and other articles, in the Museum Christianum of the Vatican Library) to draw our knowledge of those monuments chiefly from engravings, in the works of Bosio, Aringhi, Bottari, and others.

Enough, however, remains to establish two curious facts. First, with the fourth century, art, in all these three departments, although still low, had actually, under the excitement of a new class of feelings, risen considerably above the level to which it had been sunk during two hundred years. Secondly, this partial re-awakening was but temporary. Through the fourth, fifth, and a part or the whole of the sixth century, it is not possible to trace the changes of art with certainty; but before the end of that period, it had evidently begun that miserable decay, from which it did not recover for six hundred years. Indeed, in distinguishing between the works of these two eras, the merit of a monument as a specimen of art is generally one of the surest criterions.

All these antiques, even those belonging to the first three centuries of the Christian empire, are marked by a want of animation and of fidelity to nature, and by a stiffness and mechanical adherence to precedents, reminding us of the hieratic manner in Greece; but they often, in form, attitude, and drapery, vividly recall the later works of classical art; and the style of some of the paintings on the walls of the catacombs is that of Pompeii, in an imperfect imitation.* We even perceive

* One of the best designed and best executed sets of reliefs, is that on the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, prefect of Rome, who died in 359. The coffin was found in 1595, in digging the foundations of the New Confession of S. Peter. It is now in the chapel of S. Helena, in the subterranean church. Engraved, with other sarcophagi found in the ancient Vatican burying-ground, in Aringhi's work, lib. ii. cap. 10.

in a few heads, particularly on one or two mosaics, an expression of rude sublimity which is quite wonderful. Of the roughness of conception and the singular want of taste which, besides the coarse execution, disfigure most of these works, we may take an example from the representations of Noah. His ark is invariably a rectangular box, scarcely large enough to contain him, and sometimes having a hinged lid, which is forced up by the patriarch's head, as he looks out to discover the dove with the olive-branch.

PART II.

ITALY IN THE DARK AND MIDDLE AGES.

CHAPTER I.

THE DARK AGES.

Political History; State of Society; Literature and Art.

A. D. 476—A. D. 1000.

POLITICAL HISTORY :—*Introduction*—The Teutonic Nations—The Italians. FIRST PERIOD :—ODOACER AND THE EAST-GOTHS (A. D. 476—568) :—*External History*—Theodoric—Belisarius—The Islands—*Internal Polity*—Theodoric's Government. SECOND PERIOD :—THE LOMBARDS (A. D. 568—774):—*External History*—Alboin—Italy Imperial and Lombardic—The Roman Revolt—Pepin's Gift—Charlemagne's Conquest—*Internal Polity*—The Lombardic Governors—The Personal Laws—Municipalities—The Imperial Provinces. THIRD PERIOD :—THE FRANKISH EMPIRE, AND FIRST DYNASTY OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE (A. D. 774—1002) :—*Internal Polity*—Charlemagne's Government—The New Italian Nation—The Feudal System—*External History*—Fall of Charlemagne's Empire—Petty Sovereignties—Anarchy of the Tenth Century—The Republics—The Greek Provinces—Otho and Crescentius—The Saracens in the Islands. STATE OF SOCIETY :—*Secular Relations* — Baronage — Vassalage — Serfship — Agriculture—Commerce—*Religion*—Superstitions—Monasteries—Nunneries. LITERATURE:—*The East-Goths*—Cassiodorus—Boëthius—*The Lombards*—Saint Gregory—The Monks—*The Franks*—Barbarism—*The Tenth Century*—Gerbert. ART:—Its Character—*The East-Goths*—Ravenna—*The Lombards*—Pavia—Spoleto—Florence—Paintings and Mosaics—*The Franks and Saxons*—Specimens—Classical Traditions.

POLITICAL HISTORY.

THE course of Italian history has hitherto resembled a broad and deep river, receiving many tributaries that

increase its volume, but none large enough to divert it from its ancient bed. Now, however, we reach a point, at which the aspect of the scene is changed. Impetuous torrents, successively rushing down into the valley, bear with them the accumulated waters of boundless wastes; the river into which they pour is violently forced into new channels; and the flood which at length emerges from the tumult, is transformed alike in appearance and in name.

The spectacle which we are here to behold, is that of a country which several races of foreigners occupy in succession as masters; while the natives on whom they intrude, neither extirpated like the American savages, nor remaining permanently separated from their conquerors like the Hindoos in British India, stand indeed for a time as tributaries, but at length coalesce with the various tribes of invaders into one united people. This progress of events was, in a greater or less degree, common to all Europe during the dark ages. But in regard to Italy we shall be best enabled to comprehend the spirit of history in those times, if we first take a rapid survey of the position previously held by each of the two races, the conquerors and the conquered.

Of the four dynasties which successively ruled that country,—Odoacer's, the East-Goths or Ostrogoths, the Lombards, and the Franks,—all except the first (whose followers were a body of hirelings collected from various regions) introduced a population sprung from one common blood, the Germanic or Teutonic. If we look to the situation either of literature, art, or useful industry, we must acquiesce in the opinion which pronounces those warlike tribes to have been rude barbarians; but if we inquire into their social institutions, we shall discover reasons for forming a very different judgment. Amidst that wildness, both in morals and in manners, which can only be subdued by intellectual cultivation,—with none but unwritten laws, either civil or criminal,—with superstition and warlike fierceness

troubling private life and corrupting even the sources of justice,—the northern nations at the fall of the empire acknowledged, in the structure of their polity, several principles more just than any that ancient wisdom had discovered,—principles which still subsist among ourselves, and to which we owe no mean portion of our modern civilisation and liberty.*

The East-Goths had a strongly monarchical constitution, which in the mean time we may leave altogether out of view. As to the other nations, the tenure of the supreme rule differed among the several tribes and at successive periods; but each state was, after a time at least, a monarchy strictly limited and oftenest elective. The sovereign power, however, was vested in the whole body of Freemen able to serve the state as soldiers; and its prerogatives, including the right of making war or peace, and of imposing taxes and burdens on the community, were exercised in the National Assemblies or Diets of all the citizens. The lands were divided into districts, to which we might aptly give the name of counties; and each of these was placed under a chief, whose usual Teutonic name of Graf or Gravio has been translated by the Latin word Comes or the modern Count. Holding his office originally by inheritance, but afterwards under an appointment from the king, he commanded in war the freemen of his district, and also presided in their courts of justice. But in the latter, the judges were the freemen themselves, either all resident in the countship, or a number of them arbitrarily chosen; and the deficiencies of this judicial body were eked out by contrivances once familiar in our own country,—the oaths of the compurgators, who appeared for the accused party, or the judgment of God ascertained through the

* Meyer, Institutions Judiciaires des Principaux Pays de l'Europe, 1819, tome i. pp. 17-40, 62-125, 141-162. Savigny, Geschichte des Römischen Rechts im Mittelalter, 6 vols. 1815-31; (particularly chapter iv. of vol. i.; Translated by Cathcart, Edinburgh, 1829; History of the Roman Law in the Middle Ages). Both of these great works will aid us at almost every step.

ordeal or the wager of battle. In war the battalions, composed of the free inhabitants of each district under their Count, were united into one army, led by the Herzog, whose title we translate Dux or Duke, and who, in the earlier times at least, not only wanted all civil authority, but held his office no longer than the campaign endured.

It has been questioned whether, previously to the invasion of the Roman Empire, those nations had a hereditary Nobility; but the existence of such a caste seems to have been sufficiently established. In Italy we see the nobles among the Lombards called, as among our Saxon ancestors, Edelings or Ethlings; and the Criniti or Long-haired Chiefs of the Franks belong to the same class. But the position in which they stood is uncertain, and, at the very utmost, they can have possessed two privileges only: first, the right of eligibility, either exclusively or by preference, to the throne and the great offices of the state; and, secondly, that of attaching to them, for their private feuds, martial retainers, whom we are not to confound at this stage with the feudal vassals, but must regard as bound to their leaders by none but personal ties, and rewarded merely by the acquisition of military fame or a part of the booty. The nobles shared the general prerogatives of citizenship with the second class or Commoners, the Arimanni of the early Lombards, and the Rachimburgi of the Franks. But we may discover, likewise, two degrees of men who were not citizens: the first consisting of those who from poverty were unable, or as conquered foreigners were not allowed, to yield to the state that military service which was the indispensable condition of the franchise; and the second composed of the slaves or serfs, whose situation was much less degraded than that of the corresponding order among the Romans.

Here, as in the early republic of Rome, war was the business of every franchised citizen; but the Transalpine tribes went even farther than the old Italians in their love of arms, for every other pursuit, not excepting agri-

culture itself, was openly despised and neglected. The slaves were almost exclusively the husbandmen, and, perhaps without any exception, the artisans of the state.

As to the religion professed by the Germanic invaders, although Odoacer's soldiers may very probably have presented as much diversity in faith as in lineage, all the succeeding races had been converted to a rude Christianity before they crossed the Alps. Arianism, however, was the creed both of the East-Goths and of their conquerors; and the priests and laymen of Catholic Italy had this theological difference to allege as an additional source of dislike towards their masters. But among the Lombards the orthodox opinions rapidly gained ground; and when Charlemagne and his Franks bestowed on them an authoritative preponderance, the people seem to have been quite ready for the change.

We must next call to mind the most prominent features in the condition of the Italians, or Romans, as they were called by way of distinction. We have seen them under the Lower Empire, feeble, worthless, ignorant, and unhappy,—deriving from the recollection of their vanished greatness haughty discontent instead of noble emulation,—blighted as well by their own vices as by those of their rulers,—and withering away from the face of the earth, with a rapidity which threatened their land, and that at no distant time, with utter depopulation. That neglect of productive industry which had once begot in the country a general inaptitude for trade and commerce, was now extended, as among the Teutones, to agriculture likewise; while the motive here was not, as beyond the Alps, the spirit of martial pride, but indolence in many cases, and heart-stricken poverty in many more. The laws and the system of society conspired together to work unspeakable evils. What was to be hoped from a country where the land was cultivated exclusively by bondmen, where artisans in many departments were compelled to follow the trade of their fathers, and where repeated

laws declared it infamous for a man of noble rank to engage in commerce?

The political rights of the people had been for centuries absolutely extinguished. Those active prerogatives which constituted the citizenship of republican Rome were lost beyond recall; and that protective privilege of self-taxation which was so remarkable a point in the Germanic constitution, had, as we have seen, never been claimed in ancient Italy.

Constantine's system of polity subsisted in all its parts, and especially in its separation of the military power from the civil. The former, throughout the insular as well as the continental districts, was lodged in the hands of several counts and dukes, subject to the control of one of the imperial generals or masters of the soldiery. For administrative and judicial purposes, Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, composed, as we have noticed, seventeen provinces, each of which was ruled by a governor appointed by the sovereign; while these officers again were subordinate to the prætorian prefect, who performed the duties of his place by a delegation to two vicars, one for Upper Italy, the other for the rest of the peninsula and the islands.

Among the municipalities, Rome, as we formerly discovered, having long ago lost every ancient right, had been, with the adjacent country, erected into an imperial province, governed by the prefect of the city. But the august names of the republic still survived, like ghosts hovering round the sepulchre in which their bodies are buried. The senate was partly filled by imperial nominees, partly by persons whose fathers had sat in it; and its members formed, in the fallen metropolis, an aristocracy whose claims to respect mocked the name of nobility. The consuls, created annually by the emperors, exhibited games to the people, the sovereign paying the expense if the candidate was too poor to do so. The patriciate had been converted into an honorary dignity of the first order, which was conferred with extreme parsimony, and, being generally united

with a viceregal appointment, speedily came to denote an office of that class.

The privileges of the other chartered towns were, at the time now under our consideration, nothing better than burdens and pretexts for oppression; but, like our own right of returning members to parliament, which was once scarcely less burdensome and useless, the institution contained the seeds of infinite public advantage. It must be remarked that, in respect to the town-councils and their functions, the constitution of the municipalities had already assumed the aspect of a close aristocracy; for no other name can be given to an administrative body, whose members sat either in virtue of their birth or by mutual election, and nominated from their own number all the magistrates of the corporation. The introduction, indeed, of the defensorship, a very singular measure for the age in which it appeared, broke up the monopoly of the judicial functions, bringing forward the democratic principle in its broadest extent; and even if it be true, as there is some reason to suspect, that the old system of magistracy was not in Italy every where completely rooted out, the diffusion of the popular franchise was undoubtedly general enough to teach the people lessons, of which we shall see them in better times availing themselves with equal spirit and advantage.*

* On the Roman Municipalities the principal authority is Savigny, who has been the first to show systematically their survivance through the dark ages, and the remarkable relation which, as the foundations both of the Italian republics and of other chartered cities in the middle ages, they really hold to modern history. Neither Sismondi nor Hallam enjoyed the benefit of the great civilian's researches; but Palgrave has turned them curiously to account in the elucidation of our own national institutions. Students acquainted with Savigny's work will not fail to observe, that here and in the preceding volume Roth has been followed as to the Defensorship, which Savigny considers to have been, as a magistracy with jurisdiction, unknown in Italy, although general in the provinces, where, he maintains, proper civic magistracies were, till its institution, exceedingly rare. Translation, vol. i. p. 69-74. Roth, De Re Municipali Romanorum, p. 103.

If, being simply informed that an amalgamation of the Italians and their Germanic conquerors finally took place, we were required to say which of the two was the more likely to have attained the predominance in the new nation, probably few of us would hesitate to answer, that the Transalpine tribes must have become the ruling class. And yet we know, that the issue was precisely the reverse, not only in the other provinces of the empire, where the fact is not so surprising, but in Italy itself, where every ordinary presumption was against it. The Roman code was received as the law-book of the united people; the Roman language furnished almost all the materials of their tongue; the Roman character, both moral and physical, was vividly impressed on the new population; and the Roman system of civic government became a framework, about which they constructed one of the noblest edifices ever consecrated to political freedom. Some causes can be specified as obviously tending to facilitate this result; and, in particular, the comparative rudeness of the Teutones, both in intellect and in manners, the exclusively military temper of all their septs, and the peculiar method in which every nation among them dealt with the institutions of the subjugated country. Still the fact affords themes of speculation, which are only exceeded in difficulty by that greater riddle of the dark ages,—how, out of the fragments of the free Germanic polity, was forged the many-linked chain of feudal despotism.

FIRST PERIOD.

ODOACER AND THE EAST-GOTHS.

A.D. 476—568.

External History.

Odoacer, and his mixed band of revolted troops, conquered the whole of Italy without a blow; but the circumstance in which his rule over it differed most materially from that of the princes who had last preceded

him, was nothing more than this, that he abstained from claiming the imperial title, and professed to be content with the name of patrician or viceroy of the empire over its provinces in the west, conferred on him by Zeno under the pressure of alarm. His Heruli and other Transalpine soldiers, however, proclaimed him king of Italy; and the forced acquiescence by which the court of Constantinople confirmed his usurpation, preserved for it none of the real prerogatives of sovereignty.*

His military government had lasted scarcely thirteen years, when the great Theodoric, king of the East-Goths, who had been educated at Constantinople, and had served in the imperial armies, obtained from Zeno, desirous of displacing the Heruli at any sacrifice, an unwise grant of Italy as a tributary province of the empire. Crossing the Alps from Germany in the year of grace 489, with an army including the whole mass of his warlike subjects, he slew Odoacer in 493, and wore the crown thirty-three years, with little regard to the terms of the imperial grant, fixing his seat of government at Ravenna. Two of his descendants successively possessed the sovereignty, and the elective kings who followed them extended the Italian dynasty of the Ostro-Goths to a duration of sixty-four years.

During the last seventeen years of this period, however, Italy was the scene of continual and bloody wars,

* The East-Gothic Kings of Italy; from Theodoric's invasion till the death of Teja (553).

A.D.		A.D.	
489.	Theodoric	540.	Hildebald
526.	Athalaric	541.	Totila
534.	Amalasuntha and Theodatus	552.	Teja
536.	Vitiges		

The Roman Bishops or Popes; from Odoacer till the Lombard invasion.

A.D.		A.D.		A.D.	
468.	Simplicius	514.	Hormisdas	535.	Agapetus I.
483.	Felix II.	523.	John I.	536.	Silverius
492.	Gelasius	526.	Felix III.	538.	Vigilius
496.	Anastasius II.	530.	Boniface II.	555.	Pelagius I.
498.	Symmachus	532.	John II.	559.	John III.

from which its wealth and intellectual cultivation suffered infinitely more than from the Goths. On the election of Vitiges, Justinian, emperor of the East, sent his celebrated general Belisarius to reconquer the lost provinces, on which there ensued a very obstinate struggle. In 537, the Gothic leader invested Rome, which withstood, during fourteen months, the siege rendered so famous by the successful defence of the imperial commander. Totila, elected king the year after the capture of Vitiges in Ravenna, took Rome in 546, expelled its inhabitants, and was with difficulty dissuaded from rasing the city to the ground; and within two years after this, Belisarius having been recalled, the barbarians were again for a time rulers of Italy. But, in 552, it was invaded by Narses the eunuch, Justinian's new general, who, killing the valiant Totila and his successor Teja, became in a year or two master of the whole country. He presided over it peaceably for fifteen years, as the Exarch or imperial governor; but, being disgraced and recalled in 567, he invited the Lombards, a powerful German tribe on the banks of the Danube, to cross into the rich valleys of the south.

The Italian Islands usually followed the fortunes of the neighbouring continent. While the Western Empire yet existed, all of them had fallen under the savage rule of Genseric, the king of the African Vandals, who, in the year 476, made a grant of Sicily to Odoacer, stipulating for a tribute, and retaining Lilybæum with other strong places. That island, next passing into the hands of the East-Goths, was conquered from them by Belisarius in his first invasion, and, after several changes of masters, became again subject to the Gothic princes after the great general's disgrace. In the mean time, Sardinia and Corsica continued tributary to the Vandals, till the destruction of their kingdom in 534, when these islands became dependencies of the Greek Empire, but were speedily conquered by Totila. After the brave Narses had reduced the peninsula, and annihilated the Goths in that quarter, he closed his series of victories by over-

running the three islands, and rooting out the last remnants of the subdued barbarians.

Internal Polity.

During a century after the fall of the empire, the depopulation of Italy received no effectual check; for, while slaughter, pestilence, and famine, raged together or by turns among the native inhabitants, neither Odoacer's barbaric horde, nor the nation of the Goths, were sufficiently numerous to fill up, in any perceptible degree, the gap which thus every where opened. Tuscany, Æmilia, and others of the most fertile districts, are mentioned by writers of those times, in terms which would apply to the modern condition of the Roman Campagna.

The only change of any importance that was introduced in Odoacer's short reign, affected the landholders, a part of whose estates was given to the barbarians, according to the usual practice of the Transalpine tribes in conquered countries. In some of the Roman provinces, such as Spain and Burgundy, the Teutones seized two-thirds of the land; in Italy they were always more forbearing. The proportion confiscated by Odoacer was only one-third; and it cannot be determined whether the seizure spread generally over the peninsula, or was limited to the extent necessary in order to provide for the invading soldiery. The latter supposition is the more probable. In every other particular, the imperial polity remained untouched, and the government, general, provincial, and municipal, the judicial establishments, and the Roman laws, extended over all classes and races of the inhabitants.*

The great Theodoric, a wise as well as brave man, who, if he despised the corrupted learning of the south, had profited largely by his observation of its institutions and manners, followed in his Italian kingdom a system entirely different from that which was adopted by the

* Savigny, vol. i. p. 314. chap. v. sect. 4.

other conquerors of the empire. Perhaps, indeed, he was the only Teutonic prince that could have pursued a plan of his own; for, although the other nations had a government elective and liberally constitutional, the East-Goths were, till after his reign at least, under an hereditary monarchy, which was strictly absolute.*

The principle of his policy was concession, towards all with whom his situation threatened collision;—towards the emperors of the East, whom he in vain attempted to pacify by affecting to hold his dominions as merely their delegate; towards the orthodox church in Italy, to which he, an Arian, showed great respect, protecting its hierarchy, its revenues, and its privileges; lastly, towards all the native Italians, in regard to whom his system amounted not merely to a preservation of their national laws and institutions, but to an imposition of them upon his own subjects. If, as it has been expressed, the other northern tribes had no wish to Germanize the Italians, Theodoric's wish was to Italianize his Germanic countrymen.

The usual partition of the lands took place, and the proportion seized was the same as under Odoacer; but the increased numbers of the invaders may, perhaps, have made it now necessary to divide estates that had not previously been encroached upon. In each of those manors, the two-thirds which were left in the hands of the old owners, remained subject to the imperial land-tax, from which the portion assigned to the Goths was exempted. The ancient poll-tax was levied from the same classes of individuals who had been wont to pay it; and the ruinous lustral contribution was likewise retained, while customs on merchandise, exacted at the seaports, were usually farmed out.

The offices of the royal household, those of the supreme administration, and the provincial governments, remained unchanged both in character and in name.

* Consult, for the subject of this section, Sartorius, Versuch über die Regierung der Ostgothen; Hamburg, 1811.—Savigny, vol. i. chap. v. sect. 5.—Gibbon, chap. xxxix.

All these posts were filled much oftener by Italians than by their masters; but the army of the new state was composed exclusively of Goths, and indeed embraced the whole nation. This refusal to the natives, of the privilege of bearing arms, which in better days would have been felt both as an insult and a punishment, could not at this time have been considered as either; for the degenerate people had long ceased to be martial, and the lances of the barbarians had glittered for centuries in every camp and on every highway between Sicily and the Alps.

It is still more needful to observe, that the old municipalities subsisted, and retained in every particular the same position which they had occupied in the lower empire, with this one exception, that the Gothic kings treated them with much greater lenity than the emperors. The fact that they were allowed to survive is highly important and has been generally overlooked.*

The code of laws for the state, civil and criminal, was contained in Theodoric's edict, issued in the year 500, founded directly on the Roman jurisprudence, and binding both on Goths and Italians.†

While the king scarcely tried to hide his contempt for those public amusements which had so powerfully aided in destroying the national character, he took care to maintain them in all their former magnificence; and the second great demand of the populace in Rome, the imperial supply of provisions, which had been intermitted by Odoacer, was now restored. Fortifications, a number of palaces, and other public buildings, were erected in various parts of Italy; the Pontine Marshes, and similar swamps in Umbria, were drained and rendered fit for cultivation by private persons, to whom Theodoric granted them on that condition; and thirty years of peace and equitable government enabled agriculture to revive as far as it could, within so

* Savigny, vol. i. pp 320, 321. chap. v. sect. 5.

† Savigny, Geschichte, vol. ii. p. 164-168. chap. xi.

short a time, and in a land where the system of rural economy was radically defective. It is a remarkable but certain fact, that Italy, which we saw under the empire dependent for the existence of its people on constant importations of foreign corn, was able more than once, during the reign of this wise barbarian, both to supply its own necessities, and export a surplus to Gaul. But commerce and the useful arts, labouring under all the ancient obstacles, were far less prosperous.

The good which, in this system of things, was introduced to palliate much inveterate evil, vanished almost entirely with its great author. The misconduct and misfortunes of his successors roused to downright hatred those angry feelings among the Italians, which his kindness had been merely able to suspend; and the invasion of those fierce mercenaries who formed the armies of Belisarius, precipitated the country into an abyss of misery even more deep and hopeless than that from which Theodoric had raised it.

Of the state of Italy and the islands during the administration of Narses, it is only necessary to say, that the few changes in the imperial system which the Goths had introduced now disappeared, and that the Lombards, on their irruption, found every thing nearly as the western emperors had left it. The abolition of the nominal consulship in Rome by Justinian, in the year 541, marks an epoch which, unimportant as it really is, classical recollections forbid us to overlook.

SECOND PERIOD.

THE LOMBARDS.

A. D. 568—774.

External History.

Alboin, king of the Lombards, whose murder by his wife Rosmunda forms so tragical a picture of the wild revenge of the times, subdued Italy without resistance,

and founded a kingdom which lasted two centuries.* Its capital was Ticinum, now called Pavia, and it never embraced the whole of the peninsula.

Even after 590, when the conquests of Authar had extended it to its utmost limits, the Greek emperors retained a considerable territory. Their dominions comprehended the following provinces:—1. The Exarchate Proper, or country immediately surrounding Ravenna, and comprising (1.) the modern Romagna, (2.) the districts of Ferrara and Comacchio, (3.) the region of the Maritime Pentapolis, which was a line of towns commencing with Rimini and ending with Ancona, and (4.) a second Pentapolis or Decapolis, embracing the adjacent inland country as far westward as the ridge of the Apennine.†

* The Lombard Kings in Italy: Dynasty of 206 years.

A. D.	A. D.	A. D.
568. Alboin	653. Aribert I.	712. Liutprand
573. Clephis	661. Pertharit and Godibert	736. Hildebrand
582. Authar		744. Rachis
591. Agilulf	662. Grimwald	749. Aistulf
615. Adelwald	671. Pertharit	757. Desiderius, with
625. Ariwald	686. Cunibert	
636. Rothar	700. Leutbert	769. Adelchis
652. Rodwald	701. Ragimbert and Aribert II.	

The Roman Bishops or Popes under the Lombard dynasty.

A. D.	A. D.	A. D.
559. John III.	642. Theodorus I.	701. John VI.
573. Benedict I.	649. Martin I.	705. John VII.
578. Pelagius II.	655. Eugenius I.	708. Sisinnius
590. Gregory I. (the Great)	658. Vitalianus	708. Constantine
	672. Adeodatus	715. Gregory II.
604. Sabinianus	676. Donus I.	731. Gregory III.
606. Boniface III.	679. Agathon	741. Zacharias
607. Boniface IV.	682. Leo II.	752. Stephen II.
614. Deusdeditus	684. Benedict II.	752. Stephen III.
617. Boniface V.	685. John V.	757. Paul I.
626. Honorius I.	686. Conon	768. Stephen IV.
640. Severinus	687. Sergius I.	772. Adrian I.
640. John IV.		

† This description of the Exarchate is correct, according to the geographical meaning usually attached to the name; but if we would be historically exact, we should remark, that Bologna and its territory likewise remained subject to the Exarchate till the year 728, when they were conquered by the Lombard kings.—Savioli, Annali Bolognesi, tom. i. parte 1, p. 67.

2. Rome and its duchy, which, including on the east the Sabine mountains, was bounded on the west by the sea from Cività Vecchia to Terracina; while its northern limit, though not a little doubtful, seems to have originally coincided with that of the City Prefect's jurisdiction, but to have been by subsequent Lombard conquests removed considerably nearer to the Tiber. 3. The duchy of Naples, which was restricted to the territory immediately surrounding the city and bay. 4. The islands in the upper end of the Adriatic, forming the new Venetian League. 5. The islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica.

The remainder of Italy was subject to the Lombards, and, till the reign of Authar, was all embraced in the dominions of the kingdom to which that nation gave a sovereign. But the long minority of that prince, and the attacks of the emperors and their allies, had strengthened the greater Germanic chiefs in the Lombardic dominions; and one or more provinces, whose locality gave importance to the military services of the inhabitants and their governors, continued thenceforth to be ruled by their dukes with a species of independent royalty. The oldest of these new states was the duchy of Benevento, which gradually spread from Samnium, its original seat, over half the modern kingdom of Naples; and the example was followed, though at a rather later period, by the smaller duchy of Spoleto, covering Constantine's province of Umbria.

Italy remained thus divided between the Exarchate and the Lombard kings and dukes, till the accession of Liutprand, the paramount sovereign of that people, and the election of Pope Gregory II. This ambitious prelate, on the ground or pretence of heresy in the reigning emperor Leo the Iconoclast, fomented a discontent which terminated in a revolt of all the imperial provinces on the mainland, except the district of Naples; and about 731 the duchy of Rome was formed into an independent republican state. The subjection of the remainder of the Exarchate to the Lombard kings, begun by Liutprand,

was completed by Aistulf, who next threatened Rome. The bishops of that city prayed for aid from the great Pepin, ruler of the Franks, now the most powerful of the German nations; and in 754 this prince, having entered Italy, expelled the Lombards from the Exarchate. His invasion had been preceded by his famous Grant to the Popes, which was the first formal recognition of their character as temporal rulers.* By this deed the provinces of the Exarchate Proper were bestowed on "the Church and the Roman republic," and the pontiffs were created patricians of the territory, that is, were appointed imperial lieutenants, with the full powers of the former Exarchs, and the first rank in the state after the emperors. This gift did not indeed include either the duchy of Rome or the city; but, in the latter, it is certain that the popes had exercised temporal authority before that time. The western empire did not long remain without the emperor, whose privileges were thus exercised and reserved.

The Lombards united again under their last kings, Desiderius, duke of Tuscany, and his brave son Adelchis; but in 774, Charlemagne, the renowned heir and successor of Pepin, finally vanquished these military chiefs, and overthrew the power of their nation in Italy.

Internal Polity.

We have now reached a point from which we are to behold the ruins of ancient Europe forming distinctly the foundations of its modern structure.

The Lombardic Kingdom. The new lords of the south, although they rapidly improved after their settlement, were in every respect a ruder and fiercer race than the Goths who had preceded them; and among their elective kings, likewise, there arose no man actuated by the enlightened spirit of Theodoric. Nor does there seem to be any reason for doubting that they were far harder

* Savigny, vol. i. p. 341-348. Gibbon, chap. xlix. Muratori, Annali d' Italia, tom. iv. p. 314 (ad annum 755), p. 385 (ad annum 783).

taskmasters to the natives than any of the previous invaders; and their numbers, which in the north at least bore a large proportion to that of the Italians, made the latter feel their subjugation more keenly than ever.*

When slaughter and the wonted confiscations had at length given place to a settled system, the Romans were of course compelled to contribute towards the support of their conquerors; but instead of surrendering a part of his estates, each Italian landholder was now required to give over annually a third of their produce to a Lombard, who, as in some other countries, was called the Guest of the tributary proprietor. This division of fruits was evidently much more severe than losing a third of the manor itself; but it was alleviated by the abandonment of the old land-tax, and the whole system was speedily relinquished. Although the matter is confessedly obscure, the tribute of fruits disappears in the course of the seventh century; and it has been supposed with much probability, that, where force was not used, the Italian owners compounded with their invaders by resigning portions of their estates in lieu of the first partition.

The cumbrous establishment of the Gothic court and supreme administration was swept completely away. The provincial and military offices were likewise abolished, and their place was supplied by Royal Governors, who, according to the common Teutonic rule, possessed within their several districts the highest authority, administrative, judicial, and military. These local rulers, whose Lombardic title is lost, were called in Latin Comites, Duces, or Judices,—the last of these names indicating to the Italians their civil functions, while the two former, denoting the military command which they had in common with the old counts and dukes, were used quite indifferently, and express no distinction of rank. Those tributary Lombardic princes who have

* Savigny, vol. i. p. 377-434, chap. v. sect. 8. Gibbon, chap. xlv. Antichità Longobardico-Milanesi [Fumagalli], 4 tom. Milano, 1792-3; tom. i. Dissertazione 1.

been called the Greater Dukes, and whose rise has been mentioned, had nothing in common with the ordinary dukes or counts of the national constitution, except the name which they were pleased to retain or to borrow. Although these dukedoms and countships were numerous, the provinces attached to them were, in most cases, too large to be conveniently administered by the dignitary in person; for which reason deputies were appointed, sometimes even in two gradations,—the Sculdæsius or Hundred-man, and the Decanus or Tithing-man,—each of whom had his fixed district, with powers both civil and military. The functions of the Count, as the king's representative, extended both over Lombards and Romans; although as to the latter, besides their continued exclusion from the army, there were other important differences which must be well understood.*

The distinction of the two races inhabiting Italy,—the Romans on the one hand and the Lombards on the other,—now affected the state of society in every town and hamlet, and perhaps on every manor. The conquerors, like most other Teutones, declared that the distinction should continue to subsist, and they protected it decisively by introducing the system which has been called that of Personal Laws.† The Italians were left to enjoy their own jurisprudence both in principle and in procedure; all the Germanic settlers again, without any difference, were subjected to the Lombardic laws, which, soon collected into a written code, were administered, as usual, by the Freemen under the presidency of the Count and his deputies.

But what machinery was used for the administration of the old Roman law among the Italians? The answer, although it has never been satisfactorily given till our own times, may now be stated with perfect confidence.

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* This view of the Lombardic Counts and Dukes is Savigny's, and differs widely from the opinions usually received. Vol. i. p. 262-268.

† Savigny, *loc. cit.*; vol. ii. p. 197-202. chap. xiv. Meyer, tome i. p. 270-289, livre i. chap. iii.

The native governors of the provinces had, it is true, been displaced, and much of their jurisdiction necessarily transferred to the Lombardic counts. But the Italian towns had possessed, under the control of the Imperial and East-Gothic governors, magistracies of their own; and it is important to observe that, from the state in which society had stood for several centuries, these municipal courts must have had authority over almost the whole population of every province; for of that population, so far as it was composed of free men, the cities contained nearly the whole mass, the rural districts being inhabited by hardly any one except the slaves who cultivated the lands. The Lombards, like the Goths, left these municipal establishments exactly as they found them.

The acquiescence of the conquerors in the preservation of the Roman municipalities, was indeed facilitated by the close analogy which these institutions bore to their own. While their count took the place of the imperial præses, their hundred-man and tithing-man were in all essential points the Italian duumvir or defensor. And there was yet another point of resemblance in the position of the municipal councils in Italy, which, since their details were last under our notice, had undergone one very important change at least, having returned more than half way from the democracy of the defensorship to the earlier aristocratic constitution. The change is supposed to have been produced by the circumstance of the magistrates having, as business increased, called in Assessors to aid them, and having chosen these from among the members of the Council. The result, however, was, that the Decurions (who are now also called Boni Homines, perhaps the Buonüomini of Florence in the middle ages) appear in the Lombard period as again electing, just as of old, the magistrate who exercised the jurisdiction vested in the city, while they besides act in the character of his assessors, and have thus transformed themselves from a merely administrative board into a court of justice.

In every chartered town, therefore, the native Italians

constituted a corporation in which birth conferred the title to admission, while probably also (though this is but obscurely known) the Decurions or privileged class owed their office to a similar qualification. The jurisdiction and administrative rights of the corporation extended over its own members and its own funds only; and it must likewise be observed, that no distinction of rank was recognised by the state as subsisting among Romans, unless within their own corporate bodies.

The Lombards stood aloof from these Italian societies, and perhaps, in the earlier period at all events, seldom lived in the towns: they were organized according to their own laws, held their national parliaments on the plains of Pavia, and their courts of justice in presence of their local counts; and, easily and naturally becoming the greatest landholders of the country, they may be believed to have been, particularly in Upper Italy, the progenitors of very many of the modern nobles.

The Provinces of the Emperor and Pope. The dominions still retained by the Greeks in Italy, consisting of two portions separated by hostile territories, were administered by two Imperial Delegates, of rank corresponding to that of the ancient Prætorian Prefects; the districts communicating immediately with Ravenna being placed under an Exarch, sometimes also called a Patrician, while those in the south were subject to an officer styled a Catapan. Sardinia and Corsica were under the Exarch; but Sicily seems to have been considered important enough to deserve the immediate inspection of the imperial ministers at Constantinople.* In subordination to these viceroys there seems to have been preserved something very like the former provincial division and government, and the civil and military power were kept peremptorily asunder. The only commanders of the soldiery who had districts assigned to them were called Dukes, and these were exceedingly numerous; for although we find officers with

* Limperani, Istoria della Corsica, tom. i. pp. 255, 256, 301. Burigny, Histoire de Sicile, tome i. livre i. chap. 11, 12, 13.

this title presiding over Sardinia, Campania, the Roman province, and other large territories, yet they also occur as commandants of small rural districts, and we latterly encounter many petty ones within the duchy of Rome.*

The Municipalities, or most of them, continued to have their town councils and their magistracies. Under the pontificate of Gregory the Great, the Curiæ are mentioned in Ravenna, Rimini, and Auximum in the Exarchate, in Albanum and Terracina within the Roman duchy, in the southern towns of Thurium, Consentia, Taurianum, Crotona, and Naples, in the Sicilian city of Panormus, and in the island of Sardinia. But, while free election within certain limits had been allowed by the barbarian Lombards, these other communities, under more promising circumstances, lost every vestige of their old constitution except the paltry right of electing their own Curator or Treasurer. In Ravenna, where the system is most fully exemplified, we see the ordinary civic jurisdiction vested exclusively in several officers called Judges, Prefects, or "Dativi," and appointed absolutely by the sovereign. In that city the elective magistracy can be traced till the year 625, and is supposed to have been lost between that time and the papal occupation under Pepin's gift.

Of these provinces it may be confidently asserted, that they were much worse governed and much less prosperous than the Lombardic kingdom; and during the thirty years which followed Pepin's first campaign, the Exarchate was the scene of bloody commotions, presaging those which were to distinguish its history in later times. In Ravenna the archbishop repeatedly seized the government, and in other towns similar usurpations were frequently committed by powerful citizens. The papal sovereignty was scarcely well rooted even when Charlemagne conquered Italy.

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* Savigny, vol. i. p. 322-377, chap. v. sect. 6, 7.

THIRD PERIOD.

THE FRANKISH EMPIRE AND ITS RUINS; THE FIRST GERMAN DYNASTY.

A.D. 774—962; AND A.D. 962—1002.

Internal Polity.

The aspect of the ninth and tenth centuries in Italy is that of the deepening darkness which usually precedes the dawn. The records of the times are found to be more and more unsatisfactory; the political relations of the country, which were at first simple, became exceedingly complex, and at length utterly confused; and the scenes of anarchy and wretchedness which we are able indistinctly to discern, intimidate us from all attempts at minute observation. But that inquiry into internal polity, which was instituted in preceding sections, must not even here be quite abandoned; and as the scanty results which this stage of it will allow us to gather, relate almost wholly to the earliest years of the period, they may be most conveniently placed as an introduction to the summary of historical occurrences.

At the outset, then, we see the Greek emperors driven to the southern extremity of the peninsula, and there holding precarious rule over two narrow provinces; while the Popes, so far as stability was consistent with the turbulence of the age, have confirmed their authority over the Exarchate, and are taking cautious steps for permanently mastering Rome and its district. Both these sections of the country may be here passed over in silence. The remainder of Italy *constituted the Lombardic or Italian kingdom of Charlemagne, the new emperor of the West.*

Of the extent to which the Frankish conquerors, on seizing the peninsula, appropriated the lands or other possessions of the inhabitants, whether Lombards or Italians, we learn almost nothing; and the silence of contemporaries is nearly equivalent to an admission

that no very severe measures were adopted. Indeed, there no longer existed the former necessity for spoliation; since this conquest was not effected by a nation pouring its whole population into a foreign country, but was one which merely added another province to the dominions of a monarch, who continued to dwell beyond the Alps in the midst of his own people.

After the new dynasty had subsided into order under the direction of its great chief, we find society to have been constituted, in reference to the differences of nation, on exactly the same principles as among the Lombards. The system of personal laws remained unaltered; and no other fundamental innovation appeared, except that there was added to the former population a class belonging to the victorious race. However, the accession of new inhabitants may not have been very considerable, and perhaps included comparatively few permanent settlers, beyond the soldiery and some men of rank.

In the administrative and military departments the system continued very similar to that of the Lombards. Counts were the provincial governors, and the duties of these officers were performed in special districts of each province by deputies of various classes. In the courts of justice for the Franks, Lombards, and others, who lived under the Germanic laws, Charlemagne introduced an important change. The freemen, certainly ill qualified to act as judges, appear themselves to have now felt their enforced attendance as an unnecessary hardship; and the emperor remedied both evils by importing his own invention of the Scabini, or Echevins, who, elected by the people with the consent of the counts, were the ordinary judges in the tribunals of the county and district. Seven of them at least were summoned for every court, and the other freemen were excused, though not excluded, from all attendance, except at the head courts held thrice a-year. The scabini were strictly and properly judges, and not simply assessors of the counts or their deputies, who in fact had a mere

right of presidency in the sittings, without a voice in pronouncing the judgment.*

The Roman municipal corporations continued to exist, not perhaps in all the old chartered towns, but certainly in far the greater number, and in every one that was to any extent flourishing. Indeed, down to the beginning of the seventh century, mention is made of civic councils and communities, not merely in Lombard towns of large size, but in some which have long ago ceased to exist, such as Mevania and Tadinum, both in the duchy of Spoleto. During the Frankish period, we can trace the curia by its ancient name in some of the greater cities of the kingdom, for a considerable time after Charlemagne: the council of Milan appears as late as the year 880, that of Placentia in 890, that of Modena in 998, and that of Pavia even in 1022. Indeed, the constitution of the towns, so far as it can be discovered, was the same with that which was described as existing under the Lombards.†

It is impossible to fix, even by approximation, the epoch at which the Germanic population and the Italian melted into one nation; but the junction may with confidence be assumed as having, in the cities at least, been effectually completed before the close of the dark ages. To the new urban community thus formed, the Teutonic settlers could impart no principles of municipal government; for their tribes had possessed no such institutions while they wandered among their northern forests, and the district associations which they had continued to keep up in Italy were of an entirely different cast. These Teutonic societies therefore disappeared, and the Roman constitution became the bond of union for the combined body of citizens. When we next encounter the Italian cities, we shall find their constitutional establishments to have undergone radical changes, many of which must have come into existence before the end of the period

* Savigny, vol. i. pp. 217-236, 257; chap. iv.
† Ibid. pp. 396, 398, 401; chap. v. sect. 8.

which the present section embraces; but the progress of these revolutions is involved in utter darkness. We lose sight of them soon after the reign of Charlemagne, not to discover them again until about the beginning of the twelfth century.

There is yet one other element of society in the dark ages, which, although it was soon overpowered in most quarters of Italy, yet in some has continued till our own days to exercise a powerful influence. The Feudal System, partially evolved all over Europe before Charlemagne's time, acquired, in his reign and during the disastrous anarchy which arose under his successors, its full force and consistency.*

That extraordinary system cannot be here described, either in its progress or in the form under which it finally unfolded itself. It is sufficient to remark, that, in the events which we are next to witness, we should perceive, if we could enter on minute details, the operation of feudalism distinctly exhibited in the relation which the leading men of Italy, the counts, marquises, and dukes, bore to the sovereigns of the state. But this influence had not yet descended among the people in general, and before it had time to do so, the rise of those civic institutions, which we shall discover in the middle ages, severed the bond over the greater part of the northern and central provinces; while in the south, and also in the north-west, the temporary check which the development of the feudal relations suffered, seems to have had, after it was again allowed to proceed, the effect of laying the yoke on the necks of the people with a weight still more oppressive than in those countries where its progress had been uninterrupted. In most of the Italian states the feudal laws exercised no material influence after the twelfth or thirteenth century; but they have nowhere displayed more decidedly their leading defect, their absolute non-recognition of the unprivileged orders, than in Piedmont and the Two Sicilies.

* Hallam's Europe during the Middle Ages (6th edition), chap. ii. vol. i. Meyer, livre i. chap. 10-15, tome i.

External History.

The Frankish Empire. Poetical fables have placed Charlemagne in a world of heroism and enchantment; and his real character and life were not unworthy of that admiration from which the romantic inventions sprang. But Italy was not the theatre of his greatest deeds; and hence his dynasty there may be passed over with little more notice than a bare enumeration of his crowned descendants, in whose weak hands his empire fell to pieces. The popes also now assume a prominent political position, and henceforth rank among the sovereigns of Europe.*

When Charlemagne first crossed the Alps he contented himself with the title of imperial patrician; and his favourite conquests in Germany distracted his attention from the south for more than twenty-five years, during which however he was sovereign of all Italy as far as the modern frontier of Naples. Beyond that point the homage paid to him by the Dukes of Bene-

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* The Frankish Emperors of Italy; and the Interregnum.

A. D.		A. D.	
774.	Charlemagne conquers Italy	881.	Charles the Fat crowned
800.	Charlemagne emperor	888.	Charles the Fat deposed
814.	Louis the Débonnaire	888-962.	Competition in Italy for the crown; ten sovereigns, five of whom crowned as emperors
840.	Lothaire		
855.	Louis II.		
875-881.	Contest for the empire		

Popes under the Frankish Empire and its Ruins.

A. D.	A. D.	A. D.
772. Adrian I.	872. John VIII.	904. Sergius III.
795. Leo III.	882. Martin II.	911. Anastasius III.
816. Stephen V.	884. Adrian III.	913. Lando
817. Paschal I.	885. Stephen VI.	914. John X.
824. Eugenius II.	891. Formosus	928. Leo VI.
827. Valentinus	896. Stephen VII.	929. Stephen VIII.
827. Gregory IV.	897. Romanus	931. John XI.
844. Sergius II.	898. Theodorus II.	936. Leo VII.
847. Leo IV.	896. John IX.	939. Stephen IX.
855. Benedict III.	900. Benedict IV.	942. Martin III.
858. Nicholas I.	903. Leo V.	946. Agapetus II.
867. Adrian II.	903. Christophorus	956. John XII.

vento was but nominal. Having in 800 re-entered the country, he was on Christmas-day of that year crowned by Pope Leo III. in St Peter's, as Emperor of Rome and of the West. No succeeding prince of his race can be said to have really exercised sovereignty over the Italian kingdom; the dominions of their great ancestor were soon partitioned out; and when, in 888, the insane Charles Le Gros, the last of the Carlovingian kings, was deposed in a diet of the empire, the principal of the southern vassals had already assumed an attitude of absolute independence.

The titles of those territorial offices which these new princes had made their stepping-stones towards a miniature royalty, were retained after their essence was altogether lost. The Dukedom, which happened to have been enfranchised earlier than the others, retained a higher estimation and dignity, though the Counts of many provinces rivalled its greatness; and the wardens of the marches, on usurping as proprietors or sovereigns the lands assigned to their post, kept up its name, calling themselves Marchiones or Marquises. In several early instances we see the three titles used indifferently. The dukes of Benevento were still the most powerful of the Cisalpine vassals, though their territory was now lessened by the formation of the principality of Salerno and the countship of Capua. The dukes of Spoleto became beyond question independent, and re-asserted their old Lombard rights. The dukes of Friuli, likewise, and the dukes, counts, or marquises of Tuscany, the marquises of Ivrea and Susa in Piedmont, and several other nobles, were petty princes, acknowledging no superior, and themselves competing for the imperial crown, and the monarchy of all Italy. During seventy-four years after the fall of the Carlovingian race, the peninsula was desolated by the wars which raged among these and some foreign claimants of the empire. The Grecian emperors received a small share of the Frankish spoils, having (although they lost the islands) been able to reconquer Apulia, together with Bruttium; where-

upon, for reasons somewhat obscure, they transferred to the latter province the name of the ancient Apulian district called Calabria.

The disorders of the tenth century generated the Italian republics. In Lower Italy, amidst the contentions of the remaining Lombard princes, Naples, Gaëta, and Amalfi, became free; but these communities sank very early.* The towns of the north were those which profited most by the growing weakness of the empire, and the discord of the nobles. While the country, having, in point of fact, no sovereign, was overrun alternately by its own nobles, the Saracens, and the fierce tribes of the Danube, the thin population of the rural districts might indeed remain disunited, but the crowds of the increasing cities could not do so: they were compelled to protect themselves, and to assume the privileges of freemen, which, moreover, the organization they already possessed gave them singular facilities for asserting with vigour and success. There is no reasonable ground for doubting, that in the end of the tenth century, or even earlier, the larger Lombard towns exercised all those prerogatives which they afterwards claimed from the German emperors, and alleged to have been bestowed or confirmed by Otho the Great.

One other city, chiefly through the neglect shown towards it, both by the Grecian and the Frankish emperors, had become really free even at an earlier period. On the invasion of Attila, fugitives from Padua and its district had taken refuge on the islets of the lagoons. They now united on the island of Rialto, and there, in the year 809, built the town of Venice, which became considerable in the course of the two centuries that immediately followed.

Istria appears to have long held nearly the same equivocal relation towards the Grecian emperors as that of the Venetian league, with which it had a federative

* See Sismondi's celebrated work, Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Age, 16 tomes; tome i. chapitre 4.

alliance. Seized however by the Lombards on their conquest of the Exarchate, it was next occupied by Charlemagne, and by him separated from its connexion with Italy, in whose history therefore it may henceforth for a time pass unnoticed.*

Rome itself was chiefly remarkable in the tenth century, for being the most miserable and vicious city of a depraved and wretched country. The native writers frankly admit the crimes of the age;—the bloody feuds and persevering hereditary revenge which reigned among all classes,—the insolence and cruelty of the feudal nobility, who not only robbed and maltreated the poor and pilgrims, but often plundered the church,—the simony of the clergy themselves, and the gross incontinence of their lives.† In the papal city the priesthood, the powerful nobles, and the mob, were alternately the masters; several popes were deposed and imprisoned, and one (Stephen VII.), after having disinterred and cast into the Tiber the body of his predecessor, was himself thrown by the citizens into a dungeon, and there strangled. Throughout the first half of the century the city was successively governed, and its bishops, clergy, and governors, appointed at will, by Theodora and Marozia, mother and daughter, women of high birth, great wealth, and unsurpassed licentiousness. Pope John X. was the paramour of Theodora, who procured his election; Marozia murdered him in prison. Theodora bestowed the government on her three successive husbands, and elevated to the papal chair John XI., who was suspected of being her son by a previous pontiff, Sergius III. John XII., a son of Marozia's first husband Alberic count of Tuscany, was raised to the pontificate in his twentieth year, and was worthy of his stepmother. In this lazar-house of crime and

* Carli, Antichità Italiche, 1789; tom. iii. pp. 177, 195, 200; tom. iv. p. 120.

† This catalogue is taken, article by article, from Muratori; Antich. Ital. Dissert. XXIII. tom. i. p. 311.

suffering, who could have hoped for renovation or even for quiet?

The New German Empire. Fresh invasions of the Saracens, to whom were now added the Hungarians from the north, filled up the cup of misery. The popes, with the acquiescence of the most powerful men in the nation, called for the aid of Otho the Great, the elective king of the Germans; and in 962, this prince was crowned at Milan with the iron crown of Lombardy, and at Rome, by Pope John XII., with the golden crown of the empire. The ancient institution, thus revived, subsisted in name at least till the conquest of Napoleon: the election of a German prince as king of Germany was considered as giving him a title to the diadem of "The Holy Roman Empire." During three centuries, as many families (the Saxon line, the Franconian, and the Suabian house of Hohenstaufen) contrived successively to preserve the elective throne to their own members; and, under these several dynasties, the imperial crown brought with it real Italian prerogatives, very ample, though never well defined. The emperor being recognised as the sovereign of Italy, all the privileges and rights of Italian princes or cities were held to flow from him alone; though he himself generally resided in Germany, crossing the Alps at distant intervals; and other causes, besides, concurred in exciting resistance to his power. We shall immediately meet with remarkable instances of such rebellion; and after the fall of the house of Suabia, in the middle of the thirteenth century, the imperial authority in Italy was reduced to a shadow.* Otho's house, that of Saxony, whose rule restored some degree

* The investiture of the "Holy Roman Empire" was conferred by the pope's coronation of the German king with the golden crown in St Peter's. The German emperors also claimed, and in several early instances received, investiture as kings of Italy, by coronation at Milan with the iron crown of Lombardy. The title of "King of the Romans" was at first given to those German emperors who had not received the imperial crown at Rome; but from the year 1493 (the accession of Maximilian I.), the title of emperor was assumed without coronation by the pope.

of tranquillity, is the only one which falls within the range of the tenth century.*

In Rome several insurrections broke out at once. The first was that raised under Otho III., by the consul or patrician Crescentius, whose patriotism one would gladly believe sincere. In 998 Otho, having besieged Rome, took it, and hanged the unfortunate rebel. The fate of Stephania, the consul's wife, and her deadly revenge on the treacherous boy-emperor, are things too horrible to be told. The constitutional history of the papal city continues so obscure as not to tempt investigation.

In the course of the ninth and tenth centuries the Islands had been exposed to many vicissitudes, and very great wretchedness. In the year 827 the Saracens of Barbary, led by Eufemio, a young Sicilian, who had seen his mistress forced into a nunnery, invaded his native country with a large force, but did not complete its conquest till 878. It was thenceforth governed by Moorish emirs, as a province of the kingdom of Tunis, from which it afterwards passed under the khalifs of Egypt. Its Mohammedan masters eradicated the Greek language and the Christian religion, and used the ports as stations for those piratical expeditions in which they scoured the Mediterranean and ravaged its coasts. During the same period, Corsica and Sardinia, unprotected by the feeble court of Constantinople, became the scene of fierce struggles between Saracenic settlers on the one hand, and the Frankish or German emperors on the other. At the commencement of the eleventh cen-

* German emperors of Italy: First line, the Saxon.

A. D.		A. D.	
962.	Otho the Great	983.	Otho III.
973.	Otho II.	(1002.	Henry II. of Bavaria)

Popes under the Saxon line of emperors.

A. D.		A. D.	
963.	Leo VIII.	983.	John XIV.
964.	Benedict V.	985.	John XV.
965.	John XIII.	996.	Gregory V.
972.	Benedict VI.	(996.	*John XVI. Anti-Pope*)
974.	Donus II.	999.	Sylvester II. (Gerbert)
975.	Benedict VII.		

tury Corsica was, nominally at least, subject to the new emperors of the West; but Sardinia, seized in the year 1000 by Musat, a Moorish pirate, was governed by him as an independent kingdom.

THE STATE OF SOCIETY.

The wretchedness which continual wars and public revolutions brought on the Italians in the dark ages, was sometimes alleviated, but oftener aggravated, by the relations in which they stood to each other individually. The feudal system, with its array of privileges for the great, and oppressive burdens for the small, had unfolded itself swiftly since Charlemagne's time; and the rural population consisted either of barons in various ranks, or of their vassals, whose rank likewise had degrees, ending in the class of the bondmen.

These last, also, were of different kinds and orders. The judges who fixed their status in disputed cases, and the notaries who composed the deeds describing it, seem in those times of ignorance to have understood but very imperfectly the distinctions of the various classes; and it is enough for us to know that their position varied, in innumerable steps, from the slave who was personally a chattel of his master, and the villein who was virtually so by being legally affixed to the ground he tilled, up to those persons who did not very materially differ from the common feudal vassals. The rise of the Adscriptitii has been already noticed as having, even in Italy, preceded the conquests of the barbarians; and after the fall of the empire, new sources of thraldom opening on every hand, the numbers of those subject to it began to emulate the multitude of the ancient Roman slaves. But the Germanic nations altered the condition of the Italian coloni in many respects, and, amongst other changes, introduced a full permission for emancipation. Under the Lombards the serf was made to pass successively through the hands of four freemen, the last of whom led him to the meeting of four roads, and there left him, no longer a bondman.

As a specimen of the condition of this class even in favourable cases, we may take an inquest of the year 905, in which certain men are pronounced, on their own confession, to be hereditary villeins of the Milanese monastery of Saint Ambrose, and attached to a manor on the Lake of Como. They are declared bound to cultivate the olives and deliver the whole oil to their masters, to pay annually certain sums of money with a prescribed quantity of corn, pullets, and eggs, and to row the abbot and his monks on the lake.

The laws of the Lombards and Franks entitled the creditor in certain cases to reduce his debtor to villeinage; and there are heart-rending stories of parents, both in Italy and the islands, who in time of dearth sold their children. Sometimes also slavery was made the penalty of crimes, and of some which do not seem to deserve so severe a sentence. If a free woman married a serf, her kinsmen were entitled to kill or sell her; if they failed to do so, she was seized as a bondwoman of the crown; and these females, when transferred to the king, were usually kept in houses of hard labour, though there was likewise another way of disposing of them. Early in the tenth century, two women, apparently of rank, both belonging to Beneventum, and bearing the same name, Ermingarda, married two men, Majulf and Bonipert, the latter of whom is called a "clerk," and may therefore have been a man of some education. These marriages excited inquiry, and the unlucky husbands were traced to be hereditary bondmen of the Nunnery of the Holy Saviour. The two serfs, with their wives and children, were seized by the authorities; and in 942, the dukes Landolf and Atenolf, by a deed subscribed with the latter prince's mark, make over to the monastery all those unfortunate persons, to be had and possessed as thralls without redemption.*

The agricultural labour, left to the lower vassals and

* Muratori, Antiquitates Italicæ, Dissertat. xiv., with the numerous illustrative documents. Ughelli, Italia Sacra, tom. viii. p. 51., in Archiepiscopis Beneventanis.

the slaves, was ill performed; and the frequent wars not only called off the landholders to serve in the host, but made them careless of raising harvests which an enemy might reap. A great part of Italy was transformed into marshes and woods, which indeed were in many places enclosed as royal or baronial preserves for hawking and hunting, the favourite pastimes of the Lombards and Franks. The plain of Marengo, so famous for Napoleon's great battle, was one of those royal chases; and in its forest, Lamberto, a claimant of the imperial crown, was killed by accident in the year 898.

Trade was equally low with agriculture. Though the weekly markets, and the fairs on the festivals of the saints, furnished necessaries for the adjoining districts, yet of foreign commerce there was almost nothing, even after Charlemagne. But at length Venice and Amalfi began to trade; spices, perfumes, and cotton, were received from the east; and wine and oil in small quantities were exported to the north. The trifling communication that existed throughout the country is shown by the total want of inns,—a fact which is illustrated by an adventure that in 840 gave a ruler to Salerno. A faction of the people in that town and Amalfi, discontented under the dukes of Beneventum, had resolved to erect their communities into a princedom in favour of Siconolf, son of the late duke, who was in confinement at Taranto, still a populous and wealthy port. A small party of the plotters visited the place disguised as traders, and, after bargaining for their merchandise during the day, went through the streets in the evening, calling out for hospitality, and redoubling their cries as they approached the prison. The jailers were tempted by a bribe to give lodging to the pretended merchants, who in the night made their hosts drunk, and carried off the captive.*

The religion of the dark ages in Italy, with a portion of that good which it is so difficult to separate from any

* Chronicon Anonymi Salernitani; Muratori, Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, tom. ii. part. 2. cap. 63, 64. Muratori, Antich. Ital. Dissert. XXXVII.

form of Christianity, resembled in most of its features the wild and ignorant times which gave it shape. Among the least dangerous of its superstitions were the acts of worship or magic rites performed by the Lombards beside certain trees and fountains. The Holy Walnut-tree of Beneventum has been believed for more than a thousand years to be the favourite scene of the witch-sabbaths; and the soothsayers and tempest-raisers of Charlemagne's time have been paralleled in much later ages. The invention of miracles, the fabrication of relics, and (a stranger offence still) their theft, were admitted to be sins; but the invocation of saints, the masses for the dead, the penances for guilt, and the pilgrimages to holy places, were authorized practices of the church, which also acquired great importance in those ages. One of the worst superstitions of the day, the appeal to heaven by the judicial ordeal, was sometimes resisted by the clergy, but always in vain. The trial by battle was a favourite one with the Lombards, and is instanced in the seventh century in the story of Gundiberga, the wife of king Rodwald, who, accused of unchastity, defended herself successfully by a champion, and was received again by her husband with all honour as before.*

The most important fact in the religious history of the times, was the foundation of the Monastic Orders. The relaxation of church discipline, and the ascetic temper naturally generated by the miseries of a rude age, may have contributed equally to their introduction; and, after they had obtained a footing, it was a point of religion to aid them with purse and limb. Several convents on the irregular plan of the Greeks appeared very early in Italy, and many hermits retired into solitudes; but Saint Benedict of Norcia was the first to form a common rule, which, imposed by him on a community of monks in 515, became the leading order of monachism in Europe. His first monastery was that of the Holy Cave at Subiaco, among the romantic mountains in the

* Muratori, Antich. Ital. Dissertaz. xxxix. tom. ii. p. 497.

upper valley of the Anio, where the holy man had dwelt alone in a cavern cut midway on the face of a precipice. His next establishment, that of Monte Cassino, on the north-west frontier of the modern kingdom of Naples, became one of the most splendid in the world. But its greatest glory was in the later middle ages; and in the earlier period the three most celebrated Italian monasteries were those of Nonantola on the river Panaro, five miles from Modena; Farfa, in the valley of the stream Farfarus or Fabaris, near the ancient Cures, about forty miles from Rome; and Bobbio, in the little town of the same name, embosomed among wild hills, near the source of the Trebbia, now within the Piedmontese frontier.

The Irish and Scottish brethren of Bobbio were in the dark ages the most zealous collectors of manuscripts in Europe. Their community, founded in the year 614 by the Irish monk Saint Columbanus, rose to its greatest wealth and fame before the end of the tenth century, and sank rapidly till the fifteenth, when its estates were gone, and its convent almost deserted. The Benedictines, who were then placed in it, became exceedingly popular among scholars for the liberality with which they gave away or sold their literary treasures: in 1795 their once magnificent library still contained about 100 manuscripts; and the French invasion, scattering these all over Europe, left in the remote valley of Bobbio nothing to invite the notice of the student except the venerable walls of its cloisters and church.*

Nonantola, the greatest and richest of all, was founded in 752 by Anselmo duke of Friuli. During its prosperity there was no Italian state, except Naples and Genoa, in which it did not possess lands and churches; and while its library, long ago utterly dispersed, was excellent and large, its collection of archives amounted

* Peyron, Ciceronis Fragmenta Inedita (Præfatio de Bibliothecâ Bobiensi, p. iii-xxxvii), 1824. Mabillon, Museum Italicum, tom. i. p. 216.

in 1784 to not fewer than 4000 pieces. But its reverses had become serious in the fourteenth century: from 1449, when it did not contain a single member, it was given over to commendators, who usually neglected it; the residence of a few monks, and the institution of a theological seminary, did something to enliven it in the eighteenth century; and its extensive and interesting edifices, which belong to the middle ages, are still well deserving of a visit from the traveller.*

Farfa, after the Lombards had burned down its oldest monastery, built about the year 550 on a site picturesquely marked by three cypresses, was restored in 681, and soon surpassed all similar establishments except Nonantola. The church, belfry, and small cloisters, which now harbour four or five monks, and grace the pretty pastoral valley of the Farfarus, are the remains of a fabric erected late in the eleventh century. The older building, having, after a stout defence by the brethren and their retainers, been taken by a roving band of Saracens in 1004, was by them converted into a fort; but while the Moorish robbers were abroad on a foray, a horde of Italian thieves took shelter in the cloisters, and, being suddenly scared away, left a fire which consumed the whole. The chronicle of the institution, compiled about 1092, states the number of its members at six hundred and eighty-three, and gives a most imposing description of its princely riches.†

The monastic spirit was at its height in the eighth century, and about the end of the tenth there were sixty monasteries in Rome alone. The richer of them had each a cell or priory in every large town, containing a church served by some of its members, and a hospice for the reception of its monks while travelling.‡

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* Tiraboschi, Storia di Nonantola, tom. i. pp. 88, 102, &c. Mabillon, Mus. Ital. tom. i. p. 202.

† Chronicon Farfense; Muratori, Rer. Ital. Script. tom. ii. part. 2. The catalogue of slaves fills the folio pages 428-440. Gell's Topography of Rome, vol. i. article "Fabaris."

‡ Muratori, Antich. Ital. Dissert. LXV. tom. iii. pp. 395, 397.

The nunneries of Italy, following the example of Saint Scholastica, the sister of Benedict, thenceforth assumed the rule of his order. During the dark ages the seclusion of nuns was by no means strict, though it gradually became more so; for Scholastica used to visit her brother once a-year, and still greater liberty was often permitted. Women of rank, like Gertrude, the daughter of Charlemagne's unfortunate victim Adelchis, were even allowed to take the religious vows and yet continue to live in their own houses. The limitations on this license, imposed by councils and imperial capitularies in the eighth and ninth centuries, were not enforced by any penalties; but there are instances of nuns having been expelled from their cloister and its possessions for irregular lives, as in the case of the convent of San Sisto in Piacenza, whose community was displaced by the famous Countess Matilda. An older punishment for a breach of the vow of chastity was, that the offending nun should be placed in one of those penal workhouses already named as receptacles for female criminals. This chastisement, however, was only occasionally used; and in the sixth century we find both St Ambrose and St Gregory successively giving directions to the ecclesiastics for consigning fallen nuns to seclusion and penance for life. There is in those times no trace of the capital punishment for unchastity.*

The religious spirit often exerted itself in the establishment of charitable institutions. Hospices for the reception of pilgrims were extremely common in Italian towns till the twelfth century (when inns became general), and were always to be found on the banks of deep rivers or the ridges of passes in the mountains. Infirmaries for the sick were numerous and ancient, and there were also a few hospitals for foundlings.

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* Muratori, Antich. Ital. Dissert. LXVI. Antichità Longobardico-Milanesi, Dissert. IX. Sancti Ambrosii de Lapsu Virginis Consecratæ Liber, cap. 8. Sancti Gregorii Magni Epistolarum lib. i. epist. 44.

LITERATURE AND MENTAL CULTIVATION.

It is a deeply humiliating truth, that the intellectual cultivation of Europe for five hundred years scarcely offers a point on which the mind can dwell with pleasure. Yet Italy may justly be considered as having stood higher in the dark ages, or at least in their earlier centuries, than any other western nation.

During all this time, literature and philosophy had no organ of expression. Within the Alps Latin speedily became all but unintelligible to the people; and the new Italian had not yet assumed a regular form. The Latin tongue itself, still the usual language of the church in its ritual, in the writings of its doctors, and even in its popular addresses to the laity, was more and more corrupted by the Germanic dialects of the successive transalpine rulers, and by the attention which the few studious ecclesiastics gave to the Christian, or even to the heathen writings of the lower empire, in preference to those of the classical times. The clergy became more illiterate year after year; the laymen never possessed any learning whatever; and the tenth century, the last of the dark ages, was for Italy, though not for some other countries, the very gloomiest period of all.

Passing over Odoacer's disturbed reign, we do, however, find, under the Ostrogoths, two names deservedly immortal. They are those of Cassiodorus and Boëthius, contemporaries, but most unlike each other. The former was inspired by the ascetic and superstitious religion of the times: the latter, a calmly poetical philosopher, was more an ancient Roman than a Christian layman.

Aurelius Cassiodorus (480-577), a Roman of senatorial family, was one of the most trusted ministers of Theodoric, and also served his successors till, tired of state turmoils and crimes, he retired to his ancestral province of Calabria, where he erected and endowed a monastery near Squillace. During his public life, he wrote a History of the Goths, now lost, except in an abridgment, and many instructive letters which are still

extant. His latter days were devoted to the composition of compilations for the education of his monks. Some of these, along with the scholastic treatises of Boëthius, were the favourite manuals of study in the monasteries of the middle ages, where compends were invariably used instead of the original sources of knowledge.

Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boëthius (473—524), was the head of the wealthy Anicii, one of those Roman families in the Lower Empire, which concealed their recent elevation under a variety of names, and some apocryphal republican genealogies. Becoming at an early age his own master, he devoted himself enthusiastically to the most diversified branches of study, extending his researches to the best times of the national literature, and to the loftiest philosophy of Greece, which he is said to have learned at Athens. In Rome he publicly gave instructions in many branches of science. After he had been loaded by Theodoric with honours and offices, a cause, of which we know little,—either a rash boldness or a real conspiracy,—excited the jealousy of the great king, now become old and suspicious. Boëthius, after being long imprisoned in the Tower of Pavia, was condemned on evidence generally allowed to have been forged, and was executed near the place of his confinement. In his dungeon he composed his "Consolation of Philosophy," a work in five books, in which prose, rich and poetical, yet wonderfully pure in taste, alternates with short pieces of verse, giving a lyrical expression to the feelings inspired by the theme. The most interesting feature of the treatise for our present purpose, is one which we have already remarked in other early Christian writings. This communing of a dying believer with his own soul might have been composed by Socrates. The consolation which the victim seeks is from philosophy, not religion; his theology is, or is intended to be, that of unassisted human reason; the great principles of evangelical hope are never once alluded to; the decorations come from the fairy land of classic legend; and in the examples of heroism the martyrs

are forgotten, and the Grecian or Roman champions of freedom honoured in their place.

The ignorance which prevailed over Italy under the Lombards may be dismissed with the mention of one name, that of Saint Gregory the Great, also of the Anician family, who was born about 540, and became pope in 590. Without believing the tale, that this energetic and able priest burned the classics wherever he found them, we know from his own letters that he regarded them with supreme contempt, and held it unclerical to write grammatically. He was worthy of his times; and the times themselves had a weak infusion of good amidst all their evil; for even the literary sins of the poor monks have been exaggerated: probably they did rather more good than harm. Their libraries preserved many classical works; their education, miserably insufficient as it was, embraced all the knowledge of the day; their wearisome chronicles (which, however, scarcely begin in Italy till the eleventh century) have been very serviceable to history; and amidst the credulity and fictions of the saintly legends, there is, even in the darkest periods, an occasional glow of mental strength, and much that was better calculated than more skilful compositions to instruct the ignorance and soften the harshness of the warlike laity.

In the active reign of Charlemagne, the whole mental cultivation of the age appears beyond the Alps; and amidst the ruins of his empire and the first struggles of the Germans, knowledge in Italy sank yet lower. From the Frankish conquest to Otho III., the theological writers are too obscure to be named; though there is more usefulness in the works of the chief historians; —Paul Warnefrid of Friuli, usually called Paulus Diaconus, and Liutprand, a Pavian, bishop of Cremona. These names, as well as those of several divines, prove the Transalpine origin of the persons who bore them.

The Italians of the tenth century possessed but one man (a foreigner) whose intellect was tolerably cultivated; and him, after denouncing him as a magician,

they raised to the chair of Saint Peter. This was the famous Gerbert, born in Auvergne, and successively abbot of Bobbio, archbishop of Rheims and Ravenna, and at last pope under the title of Sylvester II. His travels, his metaphysics, his skill in mathematics, and his knowledge of physical science, made the marvel of the ignorant French and Italians but too natural.

ART IN THE DARK AGES.

In the centuries succeeding the fall of the empire, Europe had sunk very low in art as well as in literature; but the former was not quite so depressed as the latter. It is quite true, that in none of the liberal arts did any country then produce works which, on their own merits, can claim even exemption from neglect; but many were executed, to which the skill of modern times can be traced as to its source; and, besides, amidst all the mechanical helplessness and theoretical ignorance which deform those early monuments, a finer spirit does at intervals break through, inspiring us with a compassionate respect for that genius which could resist such obstacles without suffering total annihilation.

Amongst the architectural remains of the dark ages, which are almost without exception churches, there is scarcely any which has not suffered such alterations as make it difficult to trace the original character. The few remaining mosaics which adorned them, have undergone similar metamorphoses; sculpture hardly existed at all; and our only examples of painting are derived from a few illuminated manuscripts, and a very few "diptycha" or tablets from church altars.

The monuments of the East-Gothic dynasty have disappeared in almost every quarter. Theodoric's palace at Verona, beneath whose staircase was buried the murdered Alboin, the conqueror of that great prince's descendants, has left no remains which can be even plausibly identified; but if we climb the rock of Terracina to search for the castle that the Gothic lawgiver built

there, we shall not only enjoy a magnificent prospect, but discover on the summit a striking line of vaulted galleries which formed the lowest story of the pile. We should be less successful if we attempted to find, on the island in the Etruscan lake of Bolsena, the tower in which Theodoric's dethroned daughter Amalasuntha was imprisoned and strangled. But at Ravenna our researches will be more productive.

The Germanic tribes of those ages possessed no national architecture; or, if they had one, they made no attempt to introduce it into any of the countries they successively conquered from the empire.* Neither the buildings at Ravenna, nor any other monuments of the same age, exhibit a single characteristic of the style which in modern times has been called Gothic. That widely diffused style was undoubtedly formed from the Greco-Roman by gradual deviations; but the ruins at Ravenna do not display even the first step in the progress, for they present merely a massive and impure imitation of the Roman. The most curious of them is the structure called the Tomb of Theodoric, near the walls of the city. The basement is decagonal, and each face contains a niche, closed at top with a semicircular arch. On the terrace formed by the basement rises the body of the edifice, which, for a small way near the top, is circular, all the circuit of the wall below this part being decagonal, and faced with tall rectangular recesses, enclosed by round-headed arches. Two plain and heavy cornices ornament these upright walls, and the interior is cylindrical; while above the upper cornice rests the singular roof, which is a dome, consisting of one huge hollowed stone, 35½ feet in external diameter, and originally about 14

* We want a general leading authority on Italian architecture. In this volume most use has been made of the following works:—Hope's Historical Essay on Architecture, 1835; Milizia's Lives of the Architects (Italian and Translated); the Architectural portions of Rumohr's Italienische Forschungen, 3 vols, 1827-1831; D'Agincourt, Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens, 6 tomes, fol. 1823; and some of the best books of travels.

feet in thickness. The fragment said to have belonged to the palace of Theodoric, is a gateway somewhat similar in character; and another interesting ruin is the celebrated decagonal church of San Vitale, which, chiefly built by the Goths, was dedicated by Justinian, and by him adorned with mosaics, still extant on its walls, though somewhat altered. Similar specimens in the same place are, the octagonal Baptistery of the Arians, and Theodoric's basilica of Sant' Apollinare, both containing curious mosaics. Several other churches, chiefly of the reign of Honorius, and one built by Justinian at Classe, in the renowned pinewood which skirts Ravenna, are exceedingly instructive, both as excellent illustrations of architecture in their times, and from the facility which their nearness to the Gothic ruins affords for comparison.

Art decayed rapidly during the wars of Belisarius; and the next century brought no revival. The Exarchate, indeed, sunk lowest of all; but the Lombards likewise were greater friends to policy than to art, in which they did little more than copy the works of the preceding age. The oldest churches in their capital, Pavia, have been transformed by later renovations till their primitive style is nearly undistinguishable;* and if the picturesque aqueduct of Spoleto was really erected in that age, it now exhibits none of its original masonry except its substructions and the body of its nine piers. Perhaps the character of the Lombardic architecture may be considered, on the whole, as not unfairly represented in the main features of the celebrated Florentine Baptistery, the original erection of which belongs to Theodelinda, the Bavarian queen of the great Authar. Specimens of their painting may be traced in the subterranean basilica of Assisi, and in the miniatures of the celebrated Bible of Monte Amiata, preserved in the

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* Rumohr, vol. iii. p. 170-180. But see D'Agincourt, tome i. p. 38, and plate xxiv. (architectural series); also Hope, pp. 302, 303, with the whole of chapters 22 and 31.

Mediccan Library at Florence. In Rome, several architectural portions of old churches may be referred to this period; and to it belong, though materially restored, some mosaics of S. Agnes fuori le Mura, with others, now in the vaults below St Peter's, taken from the chapel of Pope John VII., in the old basilica. Some of Benedict's buildings and mosaics, or those of a time little posterior, may still be seen in the church and monastery at Subiaco.*

The three centuries which succeeded the conquest by Charlemagne present a dreary waste. Art was never more lavish in expensive materials, never more unskilful in technical matters, and seldom farther removed from truth or beauty in its principles and expression. But very much was executed both in Italy and elsewhere. The popes were active at several periods in ecclesiastical architecture; and as examples of the earlier works of the time, we may point to the Baptistery of Constantine in the Lateran, reduced into its present form by Leo III., and to that pope's Triclinium or Lodge, whose decayed mosaics now stand in a niche opposite to the Lateran palace. Architecture lost continually more and more of its ancient principles, without gaining any new foundation; sculpture became ruder and was less used; and the paintings and mosaics grew gradually worse and worse, both in mechanism and theory.

Meanwhile, although many architectural monuments of the classical times crumbled to pieces, or were violently destroyed, many others still stood uninjured; and, though innumerable works of sculpture were already overwhelmed beneath fallen ruins, a few were yet to be seen in the streets and squares of the Italian cities. Great was the wonder which those reliques excited, strange were the names they received, and incoherent the tales to which they gave rise. Virgil, it was firmly

* D'Agincourt, Architecture, plates xxix. xxxv. Rumohr, vol. i. p. 183-195.

believed, had been a skilful magician; and, beside the Viminal Gate, there was pointed out a spot on which, being taken prisoner by the Romans, he made himself invisible, and escaped to Naples. Other legends were vouched by grave citations from a certain Book of Martyrdoms, called "Fausti," and written by one Ovid. The ruined Capitol had once, it was related, been a splendid palace faced with gold, crystal, mosaics, and precious jewels; and in its court stood as many enchanted statues as there were provinces of the empire, each having a bell hung from its neck. When a province revolted, the bell of the figure which represented it rang violently; and a priest who watched on the neighbouring tower, instantly informed the senate. The revolt of Persia having been thus announced, Agrippa conquered it with five legions, and built the Pantheon in gratitude to Cybele, who had appeared to him in a dream, and promised him success on that condition. The two colossal statues of the Quirinal were said to represent, as the names written on them testified, two young philosophers and wizards, called Phidias and Praxiteles, who came to Rome in the reign of Tiberius, and astonished the emperor by their wisdom.

The record from which these wild stories are extracted was composed as late as the thirteenth century; and some of them are current among the common people at the present day.*

* They are told in the curious description of Rome called "Liber de Mirabilibus Romæ," printed, besides other editions, in Montfaucon's Diarium Italicum, p. 283-301.

CHAPTER II.

THE MIDDLE AGES.

Political History and State of Society.

FIRST PERIOD.

A.D. 1000—A.D. 1300.

POLITICAL HISTORY—Table of Reigns—*The Popedom*—Election of the Popes—Hildebrand—Papal Prerogatives—Innocent—Countess Matilda—Internal Polity—State of Rome—Brancaleone—*Naples and Sicily*—The Normans—The Suabian Kings—Charles of Anjou—Conradin's Murder—The Sicilian Vespers—The Aragonese Kings in Sicily—Neapolitan and Sicilian Parliaments—*The Empire and the Republics*—Position of Upper and Middle Italy—Guelfs and Ghibellines—Northern Principalities—Prerogatives of the Crown—The Free Imperial Cities—Their Constitutional Theory—Frederic Barbarossa in Italy—The Diet of Roncaglia—The League of Lombardy—The War of Liberation—The Peace of Constance—Subsequent Revolutions in the Republics—Their successive Enslavement—Formation of Hereditary Principalities—Constitutional and Administrative Details in the Republics—Milan—Verona—Ravenna—Bologna—Padua—Other Cities in Central and Eastern Lombardy—Cities in Piedmont—Piedmontese Principalities—Piedmontese Parliaments. STATE OF SOCIETY—*Religion*—Prevailing Devotional Temper—Its Exceptions—Monastic Foundations—Camaldoli and Saint Romuald—Saint John Gualbert and Vallombrosa—Persecutions of Heresy—The Mendicant Orders—Saint Francis and Laverna—*Administration of Justice*—Reprisals—Ordeal — Anecdotes — *Villeinage* — Its Decline — Free Landholders in Tuscany—*Amusements*—Pageants—Pseudo-chivalry.

POLITICAL HISTORY.

GERMAN EMPERORS.	1039. Henry III.
———	1056. Henry IV.
Second Line: The Franconian.	1106. Henry V.
1024. Conrad II. (the Salic)	(1125. Lothaire of Saxony)

Third Line: The Suabian.

1138. Conrad III.
1152-1188. Frederic I. (Barbarossa, or the Redbeard)
1190. Henry VI.
1198-1212. Contest between Philip of Suabia and Otho of Saxony
1212-1250. Frederic II. (the last emperor of the Suabian House)

1250-1273. Contested elections.
1273. Rudolf I. (of Habsburg, founder of the House of Austria)
1292. Adolf (of Nassau)
1298. Albert I. (of Austria)

POPES.

(*The names of Anti-popes in Italics.*)

1003. John XVII.
— John XVIII.
1009. Sergius IV.
1012. Benedict VIII.
1024. John XIX.
1033. Benedict IX.
1044. Gregory VI.
1046. Clement II.
1048. Damasus II.
— Leo IX.
1055. Victor II.
1057. Stephen X.
1058. *Benedict X.*
— Nicholas II.
1061. Alexander II.
1073. Gregory VII. (Hildebrand: sainted)
1086. Victor III.
1088. Urban II.
1099. Paschal II.
1118. Gelasius II.
1119. Calixtus II.
1124. Honorius II.
1130. Innocent II.
— *Anacletus*
1138. *Victor IV.*
1143. Celestine II.
1144. Lucius II.
1145. Eugenius III.
1153. Anastasius IV.
1154. Adrian IV. (Nicholas Breakspeare)
1159. Alexander III.
— *Victor V.*
1164. *Paschal III.*
1168. *Calixtus III.*
1178. *Innocent III.*
1181. Lucius III.
1185. Urban III.
1187. Gregory VIII.
— Clement III.
1191. Celestine III.
1198. Innocent III. (Lothario, Count of Segni)
1216. Honorius III. (Savelli)
1227. Gregory IX.
1241. Celestine IV.
1243. Innocent IV. (Fieschi)
1254. Alexander IV.
1261. Urban IV.
1265. Clement IV.
1271. Gregory X.
1276. Innocent V.
— Adrian V.
— John XX. or XXI.
1277. Nicholas III. (Gaetani)
1281. Martin IV.
1285. Honorius IV. (Savelli)
1288. Nicholas IV.
1294. Celestine V. (Pietro da Morrone, sainted)
— Boniface VIII. (Benedetto Gaetani)

NAPLES AND SICILY.

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1. *The Normans in Naples.*

1059. Robert Guiscard, Duke
1085. Roger Guiscard

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2. *The Normans in Naples and Sicily.*

1127. Roger II., King, invested by the pope in 1130
1154. William I. (The Bad)
1166. William II. (The Good)
1189. Tancred
1194. William III.

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3. *The Suabian House in Naples and Sicily.*

1194. Henry VI. (Emperor)

1198. Frederic II. (Emperor from 1212)
1250. Conrad
1254. Manfred

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4. *The House of Anjou in Naples and Sicily.*
1266. Charles I.
(1282. Sicily lost)

5. *The House of Anjou in Naples.*
1285. Charles II.

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6. *The House of Aragon in Sicily.*
1282. Peter III., king of Aragon
1285. James, king of Sicily
1296. Frederic II., king of Sicily

DURING the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, the whole of Europe was influenced by three events: the consolidation of the Feudal System, the Crusades for the recovery of the Holy Land, and the establishment of the Papal Supremacy. Though all these occurrences affected Italy, none of them produced there the same consequences as in other countries.

The successful struggle of the popes for an ascendency over the sovereigns of Christendom, which depressed the Transalpine states, was in the peninsula an instrument of emancipation. For the power which in Italy opposed itself to freedom was the empire, the chief antagonist of the papal see; and the latter, in order to harass its formidable enemy, protected the rising republics. The fate of the feudal system in the same country was quite peculiar. It had struck root widely and deeply since the time of the Lombards; but in the twelfth century it was nearly extirpated in most of the provinces, although in a few it left its stubborn fibres in the soil, like the remnants of an ill-cleared forest, which make cultivation more difficult. The spirit of citizenship in the free towns overcame the spirit of disciplined dependence and honour in the empire and its rural baronage: the chivalrous temper not only disappeared in the emancipated cities, but was immensely weakened among the nobles in the country; and in Italian history, after 1200, we may spare ourselves the labour of looking for its essence, though we shall find its forms, first in the kingdom of Naples, and afterwards in the courts of the Lombard princes. The crusades, a genuine offspring of chivalry, thus passed over the peninsula without awaken-

ing a breath of their warlike enthusiasm; and their chief results were commercial, arising from the encouragement they afforded to the trade of the maritime states, Venice, Genoa, and Pisa.

Indeed, the rise and extension of the republics were for the Italians the most important events in those ages. In the first half of the thirteenth century, the western part of the modern papal state, and the whole of the modern kingdom of Naples, were subject to monarchical government. The remainder of the country was divided among numerous towns, partially or absolutely free, each of which was surrounded by a dependent district. In all the constitutions under which these commonwealths were administered, there were vices that made them unfit to secure the individual happiness of the citizen; in every one of them, except Venice (which was strong through its real want of freedom), there were diseases that made them necessarily short-lived; and the temper of the times, wild, ignorant, and superstitious, co-operated with political misapprehensions in making Italy unhappy. But life and growing intelligence struggled in the chaos; and the consciousness of power,—that spirit which makes republicanism strong both for good and evil,—shone like a sun on the troubled waters, and gladdened genius as it buffeted the storm.

THE POPEDOM.

Since the revival of the Roman empire under Otho the Great, the emperors had regularly placed in Rome a prefect or legate, who swore allegiance to them, and exercised a control over the civil administration. The right of election to the pontifical chair remained, as of old, in the clergy and people, whose choice had to be confirmed by the emperor. In 1047, the shameful disorders of the state induced the ecclesiastics to unite with the ruling nobles in conferring on the emperor Henry III. the exclusive right of nominating the popes. But in 1059, during the minority of his son Henry IV., a decree of Nicholas II., planned by the bold and able

Hildebrand, a Tuscan priest, who was then Archdeacon of Rome, restored the right of choice to the Romans; not however to the old electors, but to the cardinal-bishops, that is, the bishops of seven neighbouring sees, who were to elect in concurrence with the cardinal-priests, or, in other words, with the parish-clergy of the city. It was farther arranged that the election so made should receive the confirmation of the Roman people, and of Henry IV., or any future emperor on whom individually the church should be pleased to confer that prerogative.* The ratification by the sovereign was speedily evaded; that by the laity, after having been made the ground of repeated insurrections, fell gradually into disuse, and Pope Alexander III. formally took it away.

But, in the mean time, Hildebrand became pope by the title of Gregory VII. Modest and humble till he ascertained that a strong party in Germany was disaffected towards the emperor, he suddenly astonished Europe by summoning that prince to answer in the pontiff's court to the accusations of his subjects. Henry called a diet of the empire, which passed a sentence of deprivation against the pope: Gregory instantly excommunicated and deposed the emperor. A war having ensued, Henry, in 1077, made the most humble submissions to the haughty priest; but, soon regaining courage, he renewed the struggle, which was continued, chiefly in Italy, till 1122. It was called the War of Investitures, from a dispute which had speedily arisen in it, as to a right obstinately claimed by Gregory for the popes, of giving or refusing at pleasure investiture to the bishops nominated by the sovereigns. This claim, involving the inextricable question as to the boundary between the temporal powers of the state and the spiritual powers of the church, could be settled only by compromise or by bloodshed; and the latter mode suited best the temper of the times. The contest was closed by mutual concessions; but the religious feeling of the age was in

* Hallam's Middle Ages, vol. ii. p. 258.

favour of the clergy, and the disputed point was at length silently yielded. At home the pontiffs were weak, often despised, and sometimes expelled; but abroad their name grew and flourished. In 1155, Adrian IV., the only Englishman who ever sat in Peter's chair, compelled Frederic the Redbeard, the proudest king in Christendom, publicly to hold his stirrup while he dismounted from his mule in front of the cathedral of Viterbo.

The minority of Frederic II. enabled the resolute Innocent III. a middle-aged Roman noble, to fortify the temporal sovereignty of the Holy See over a large district of Central Italy. He revived, and, partly by force, partly by the submission of the principal towns, was able to bring into effect that famous donation by which, in the times of Hildebrand and his successor, the Countess Matilda of Tuscany had bequeathed to the papal see her extensive fiefs the Duchy of Spoleto and the March of Ancona. The Duchy of Rome, likewise, was brought completely into obedience. The real foundation of the territorial dominion acquired by the popes, was the growing weakness of the empire, and the discord and disorder of the cities; but its legal ground was sought in the gifts of Matilda, Charlemagne, and Pepin, the deficiencies of which were boldly eked out by a fabricated donation, still more extensive, attributed to Constantine the Great.*

The foreign prerogatives of the popes, after rising to their utmost height in Innocent's time, had begun to decline before the end of the thirteenth century; but their power at home was strengthened in 1278 by the Emperor Rodolph, who renewed and confirmed the old grants. Thenceforth the states of the church held formally of the Holy See, and the papal title was not again questioned either by the Italian states or the German monarchs.

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* The spuriousness of Constantine's Donation is now universally admitted (see Muratori, Antich. Ital. tom. ii. p. 366). The grants of Pepin, Charlemagne, and Matilda, are as unquestionably genuine; but the legal validity of the last deed, the most important of the series, has been repeatedly denied.

In their internal government, the popes were entirely free from those checks which fettered the sovereigns of the feudal kingdoms. There were with them no parliaments or other councils either general or provincial; and, according to the theory on which the pontiffs themselves insisted, they were absolute monarchs. But this was not by any means the situation which in point of fact they held. On the eastern side of the Apennine, as we shall soon discover, their prerogatives, whether founded on Matilda's gift, on Pepin's, or on the surrender of rights by Bologna and other places, were not only the narrowest possible, but in many conjunctures did not admit of being exercised at all. In the twelfth century, and even later, the towns in this quarter stood towards the popes in a relation very similar to that in which the Lombard cities stood towards the emperor; and the subjection of some of them was not completed until after the lapse of several generations. Even in their western provinces, the pontiffs had their power limited in a similar way, though to a less extent, by privileges which the towns, founding either on charters or on usage, claimed not only over their own community within the walls, but over the surrounding districts. There are several remarkable instances, showing a considerable degree of independence in places which were both insignificant in size, and placed immediately under the eye of the sovereign. Tivoli, which was long one of the most efficient allies of the pope against the citizens of Rome, elected its own magistrates till 1227, and taxed its own inhabitants; Velletri, in the same century, enjoyed a free though aristocratic constitution; and the little town of Tuscanella, near Bolsena, which is now a petty hamlet, had a government whose complication looked like a parody on the Lombard republics. We see that Innocent III. found express decrees necessary for depriving Spoleto of the right to name its own judges. The vassalship in which towns stood to the nobility, a relation quite common in Lower Italy, was rare in the ecclesiastical state; although it is instanced in the case of Terracina,

which received its local functionaries from the Frangipani, and paid taxes imposed by these lords.

In the last place, the constitutional state of Rome itself may claim a glance, though the facts are scanty, and the result does little honour to the inhabitants, who were never able to establish permanently a free political government. This fact may in some measure be accounted for by the mixture of turbulence, inconstancy, and cowardice, which characterized the degenerate commonalty; though it arose in part also from the power of their savage barons, the Colonna, Orsini, Frangipani, Savelli, and others, who converted the ancient ruins into fortresses, and by turns defied their fellow-nobles, the popes, the emperor, and the oppressed plebeians. In the repeated insurrections of the twelfth century, in more than one of which the pontiffs were expelled, it is not easy to see whether the aristocracy or the people were the movers. At all events, in 1144, the Romans, excited by the reforming monk Arnold of Brescia, established a senate of fifty-six members, annually elected by 130 delegates, ten of whom were chosen in each of the thirteen regions of the city. But, in 1192, tired of their tumultuous freedom, or falling under the control of a faction, they substituted for their numerous board of administrators a single native magistrate called the Senator. This step was the prelude to their entire subjection to the church; for, in 1198, under the pontificate of Innocent III., the senator and other municipal officers took the oath of allegiance to the Holy See; declaring that they even held their places at the pope's pleasure. Much confusion prevailed throughout the succeeding reigns, till, in 1252, the Romans, who about that time had contrived to frighten away the popes, followed the example of the Lombard cities, by electing a foreign magistrate, invested with extensive and arbitrary powers, who retained the old title of Senator.* The first of these new officers was Brancaleone, a native of Bologna,

* Curtius De Senatu Romano, 1768, pp. 421, 422, 488.

whose short rule, ending in 1258, was signalized by an unsparing severity towards the robber-nobles. He hanged them in troops, and demolished a hundred and forty of their castles within the walls. The Senatorial dignity, after this period, was often conferred on foreign princes, some of whom had in Rome no real power, while others were for the time substantially its sovereigns.

NAPLES AND SICILY.

The Greek possessions in Lower Italy were harassed by the Saracens; and the Duchy of Benevento, weakened by partition, was also attacked. In one of the opening years of the eleventh century, a body of knightly pilgrims from Normandy, on their way to the Holy Land, undertook, at the entreaty of a prince of Salerno, a crusade against the Mohammedans. The defeated infidels continued to make settlements at Luceria and in other parts of the country ; the French soldiers were invited to remain as protectors, and more of them afterwards arrived; and, founding the town of Aversa, they slaughtered the unbelievers for the benefit of the Lombard princes and the Greek emperors. But discontents arose ; and the fierce Normans, seizing Apulia in the year 1042, divided it among twelve of their own counts. The famous Robert Guiscard, about 1059, united in his own person all these earldoms ; he conquered not only Calabria, but the principalities of Salerno and Benevento, accepting for all his dominions a feudal title from the pope, with whom he had at first carried on war ; and he farther propitiated the Holy See by granting to it the city of Benevento with its district. Meantime, in 1060, Robert's younger brother, Roger, with a handful of Normans, crossed into Sicily, which he conquered after a long and bloody struggle, governing it with the title of count. On the failure of Robert's family, Roger, son of the first count of Sicily, annexed to his own island the Norman kingdom on the continent, to which he added by conquest the principality of Capua, and the republics of

Gaeta, Amalfi, and Naples, thus forming a kingdom which substantially embraced its modern territory. Pope Innocent II., made prisoner by this aspiring chief, confirmed his title to all his conquests, which were to be held as fiefs of the Holy See.

In 1194, the emperor, Henry VI., claimed the kingdom of Naples and Sicily in right of his wife Constance, the lawful heir; and, after gaining possession of the country, and staining his name by unmanly cruelties towards the family of Tancred, his competitor, he bequeathed the crown to his infant son Frederic II. The disputes of this unfortunate prince with the church about the vassalship of Naples, as well as on other questions, imbittered his whole life, engaged him in continual wars, broke his heart, and entailed misery and destruction on his descendants. On the early death of his successor Conrad, Frederic's natural son Manfred, a brave and enlightened but ambitious man, seized the kingdom, which he professed to hold for his nephew Conradin, the son of the deceased Conrad. The popes, true to their hatred of the house of Hohenstaufen, offered Naples and Sicily to Henry III. of England for his brother or son, and, on his refusal, to Charles count of Anjou, brother of Louis IX. of France. Charles invaded Italy, and, in 1266, slew Manfred in the great battle of Benevento. In 1268, the prince Conradin, a boy of sixteen, led a small band of Germans across the Alps, gathered a body of Italian troops, crossed the Apennine-frontier of Naples, and was defeated by Charles at Tagliacozzo among the mountains of the ulterior Abruzzo. The conqueror, making his young rival prisoner, consigned his own name to execration by putting him to a mock trial, and executing him with several of his followers.* The boy died bravely; and his mother, who had hastened from

* The sentence, suggested, it is said, by Pope Clement IV. (Giannone, Storia del Regno di Napoli, lib. xix. cap. 4), was approved by a general council of the Neapolitan nobles, which the French barons refused to attend. Collenuccio, Compendio dell' Istoria di Napoli, lib. iv. tom. i. p. 134 (Ed. 1613).

Germany to beg his life, arrived only in time to build his tomb, which yet stands in the Church of the Carmine, close to the spot on which he was beheaded. This barbarous deed was followed by a relentless and irritating system of oppression towards the Neapolitans and Sicilians, and by ambitious attempts on other states of Italy. In 1283, an indecent insult offered by a soldier to a young lady of Palermo, provoked (or precipitated) that universal massacre of the French in Sicily, which bears the name of the Sicilian Vespers. A war ensued between Charles and the King of Aragon, who claimed the island through a daughter of Manfred. In 1300 a treaty was concluded, by which Frederic, a younger brother of the Aragonese sovereign, was guaranteed in the possession of Sicily, which his brothers and he had already for some time enjoyed.

During the whole of this period, both Naples and Sicily had national parliaments, which, however, like all such assemblies in the feudal times, did little service to the commonalty, though much to the nobles against the crown. The system was arranged by the Normans. Their first Neapolitan parliament, summoned by Roger II., in 1140,* met at Ariano, and several others were convened under the Norman kings. Their chief business consisted in compromises of jurisdiction and other rights between the crown and the feudal aristocracy. The sovereign was much dependent on the nobility for military service and supplies; because the domain was small, and the regal rights over it were greatly curtailed by old privileges of the domanial towns, or, as we might call them, royal boroughs. Under the Suabian princes the constituency of the parliaments was extended, and their functions were so likewise. Frederic II., who did so much for the administration of justice, abolishing the ordeal, and making the criminal sentences of the baronial courts appealable to the royal judges, established also a

* Giannone, Storia di Napoli, lib. xi. cap. 3.

fundamental law of parliament. He gave, it is true, no legislative powers to the diets, and, like other kings, used their meetings chiefly as occasions on which to present demands for money; but he directed them to assemble twice a-year in certain specified towns, and to hold sittings of eight days at least, in which they were to receive and report on applications for redress of grievances. The members of these parliaments embraced, as before, the barons and prelates; but to these were now added the king's commissary or representative, one other officer of state, the royal judges, and four deputies from every royal borough.* Charles of Anjou asserted his prerogative rigidly; he seldom convoked parliaments, left them little to do except to vote extraordinary subsidies, and summoned them always to Naples, where he aimed at uniting all the nobles of the kingdom. His policy had the effect of creating a wider separation than ever between the nobility and the commons; and it began also that exaltation of the capital at the expense of the provinces, which, in two or three centuries, had assisted other causes in nearly ruining the country.† In the whole course of his reign, he held only one parliament really deliberative, that which met in Calabria on the plain of San Martino, in 1283, while the French were under the terror of the recent massacre in Sicily; but, with the advice of this assembly, he granted many new privileges to the nobility, and to the commons several important rights, relating to the form of taxation, the public services, and the administration of justice.‡ The barons were able to keep the immunities which fell to their share; but the grants made to the people were forgotten as soon as the alarm was over.

* Giannone, lib. xvii. cap. 6. On the whole subject, consult Orloff, Mémoires Historiques, Politiques, et Littéraires, sur le Royaume de Naples, 6 tomes, 1821; tome iii.

† Summonte, Historia della Città e Regno di Napoli, 4 tom. 1675; tom. ii. lib. iii. p. 208.

‡ Giannone, lib. xx. cap. 9, sect. 2.

The Sicilian parliaments, as summoned by Roger the first count, naturally consisted of no members besides the Norman barons, who had aided him in effecting the conquest; but to these were successively added the prelates, and the deputies of those towns which, holding directly of the crown, were, as in Naples, called domanial. Under the Aragonese princes these diets contrived to maintain themselves on a footing of respectable independence.

THE EMPIRE AND THE REPUBLICS IN UPPER AND MIDDLE ITALY.

The eleventh century, during which the house of Franconia was able to transmit the elective imperial crown uninterruptedly from one of its members to another, was marked by a steady effort on the part of the Italians to loosen the bands which connected them with the empire. From the middle of the twelfth century to that of the thirteenth, the imperial dignity was in a similar way preserved by the Suabian house of Hohenstaufen, to which belonged the celebrated Frederic I., called Barbarossa or the Redbeard. This able and ambitious prince, insisting on all, and more than all, the prerogatives of the empire, brought the great question with his Italian subjects to a bloody issue, in which he experienced a signal defeat. The rights of the emperors, as restricted by the arrangements that resulted from the struggle, were asserted with varying success by Frederic's descendants, whose possession of the kingdom of Naples gave a formidable weight to the claims which they advanced as heads of the empire; but, after their extinction, the family monopoly of the Germanic throne, although Rodolph of Habsburg, the founder of the house of Austria, attempted to continue it, was for some time effectually broken up; and the new series of emperors, holding no hereditary dominions on the south side of the Alps, and fully engaged in supporting their prerogatives at home, gradually lost all their hold on Italy. After 1300 they exercised no influence there, which might not

have been acquired by any other European princes; and thenceforth they cannot be regarded as in any proper sense Italian sovereigns.

The quarrels between the empire and the Italians gave rise to the party-names of Guelf and Ghibelline, obscure in origin but certainly imported from Germany. The Guelfs were the anti-imperialists, and, being usually supported by the court of Rome, were often considered as the papal party: the Ghibellines were the adherents of the emperors. In the wars of Frederic the Red-beard, the Guelfs were the champions of liberty: in those crusades which the popes directed against that prince's unfortunate descendants, they were merely the partisans of the church. The names soon ceased to signify principles, and merely served the same purpose as a watch-word or the colour of a standard.

But we must now trace in detail the history of the Imperial power in Italy, from the commencement of the eleventh century till the close of the thirteenth.

During all this period, the Kingdom of Naples and the Papal State may, as we have seen, be regarded as having been completely independent sovereignties. The remainder of the peninsula formed, in theory, a Kingdom of Italy, subject to the German emperors; but in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when we take up the history of the country from our review of the dark ages, we find the several sections of this supposed Italian kingdom to have been very variously situated in relation to their nominal sovereign.

The leading difference depended on the continuance or extinction of those principalities which we have seen previously springing up. In Eastern Lombardy, the dukes of Friuli having disappeared about the beginning of the tenth century, the Patriarch of Aquileia had seized the greater part of their territories; but his authority, like that of most ecclesiastical rulers in those times, was feebly exercised; and we discover in the middle ages no trace of the old dukedom, except the title of

marches or marquisates, given separately to the districts of Friuli, Verona, and Treviso. In this quarter, during the period now reviewed, there arose no new principalities, except that of the marquises of Este, whose territory, till the thirteenth century, was exceedingly limited. In Central Lombardy no principalities had been founded in the dark ages, and the inhabitants of this large and fertile region were directly subject to the empire. This was also the position of Tuscany, whose princes, after having acquired the dukedom of Spoleto and other provinces in the neighbourhood, became extinct in 1115 in the person of the celebrated Countess Matilda; and, Ancona with Spoleto having been transferred to the popes, the remainder of the princedom was thenceforth an immediate province of the empire. Western Lombardy, comprehending substantially the regions now united under the name of Piedmont, was in a situation remarkably different; for in it territories were held, not only by the ancient princes of the Frankish times, but by several nobles who had subsequently asserted an equal independence. The marquises of Ivrea long continued to be very powerful, but before 1300 had sunk into the rank of vassals: the marquises of Susa, possessing great influence during the first years of the eleventh century, were extinct in the male line in 1036; but their lands then passed by marriage to one of those princely houses which appear for the first time under the new Germanic empire. This was the family of the counts of the Maurienne or of Savoy, who thus obtained their earliest footing on the southern side of the Alps, and, claiming immediately high prerogatives as counts of Susa and Turin, soon usurped also the ambitious title of Lords of Piedmont. Their most determined rivals were the marquises of Montferrat, who, rising from small beginnings in the course of the tenth century, acquiring one territory after another, and confirmed in all by charters from Barbarossa, acted, from the middle of the twelfth century, one of the most brilliant parts allotted to any reigning house in Europe. One of them

was Cœur-de-Lion's fellow-crusader; a successor of that artful chief received the kingdom of Thessalonica on the partition of the Grecian empire in the fourth crusade; and the unfortunate Marquis Guillaume, who died in 1292, was father-in-law to the eastern Emperor Andronicus Palæologus. In the same region were other less powerful counts and marquises, who occasionally or permanently attained the rank of independent princes; but none ever possessed much real authority, except the marquises of Saluzzo, whose sovereignty was completely uncontrolled after the middle of the twelfth century.

Some privileges, and certain political privations, were common to all the Italian provinces of the empire. In the election of the emperor they had no share whatever; and although they claimed the right of concurring, by their diets, in the legislative and other proceedings of the sovereign, this claim was never formally allowed, and Italy was in the main considered by the Germans as a conquered country. The imperial diets, when the emperors, on crossing the Alps, thought proper to summon them, were held in the plain of Roncaglia, near Piacenza; and their members included the dukes, marquises, and counts, the archbishops and bishops, with all others who were invested with imperial fiefs.* But in all those practical relations which come into daily action and affect every man's person and property, the inhabitants of the great marquisates or counties, and those who dwelt in the free imperial towns or their districts, found themselves very dissimilarly situated. Although, in respect to the former, the prerogatives of the empire were almost a dead letter, yet their absence was far more than outweighed by the claims of a superior always present, holding the full powers of the sovereign, and exercising these, not for another, but for his own personal benefit. The latter, reminded of their foreign master

* Antichità Longobardico-Milanesi, Diss. XVI. tom. ii. pp. 240, 245, 251. Muratori, Dissertationes Italicæ, tom. ii. p. 933. Raumer, Geschichte der Hohenstaufen, 1825; vol. v. p. 75.

by nothing that did not at the same time show how unable he was to enforce his authority, acted with an energy that changed the face of the whole country.

The strongholds of this class were the towns in Central Lombardy, each of which, by original constitution or long usage, held rule and jurisdiction over large tracts surrounding its walls, while the rural nobility who occupied the remainder of the lands as immediate vassals of the empire, were at once too weak individually, and too much isolated from each other, to be able to check the impulse. From this region accordingly issued, towards all sides, that spirit of activity and resistance which, kindling most readily in Eastern Lombardy and Tuscany, as well as far southward along the shore of the Adriatic, was able likewise to penetrate into the half-feudalized valleys of Piedmont, and even to blaze for a time throughout the papal provinces in the west.

When we last left the civic communities of Italy, we had traced the subsistence of their ancient municipal organization till the times of the Frankish empire. We must not attempt to penetrate far into the darkness that hangs over their fortunes during the two hundred years that followed; but they emerge again into full light about the end of the eleventh century and beginning of the twelfth. Amidst many diversities, some of which we shall soon have occasion to analyze, we find the cities now governing themselves according to certain common principles, involving a material departure from the rules of those Roman constitutions, on which they were originally founded.

All of them agreed in holding the sovereign power within the city to be vested in the community, composed of all the franchised citizens; and every function, legislative, executive, or judicial, if not exercised by that body itself, could not be lawfully exercised by any but parties deriving their appointment, directly or mediately, from that source. Agreeably to the usual rule, every inhabitant held capable of bearing arms ranked

as a citizen; but the extent and manner of exercising the franchise varied infinitely in different towns; for, although some of the constitutions allowed every citizen a direct share in public affairs, most of them approached more or less towards a close aristocracy. Accordingly the distinction between nobles and commoners involved in some cases important differences of rights, while in others it was all but nominal; although in every town the two ranks were recognised, and in most the higher class was subdivided into two orders, the Capitanei or greater nobles, and the lesser nobles or Valvassores. On the structure of society and the fate of the towns, the distinctions between the two great classes of citizens exerted every where a powerful influence. The industry of the people made the communities wealthy; the fierce spirit of the nobles (among whom, by choice or enforcement, were soon enrolled almost all the rural barons) at once rendered the cities strong against aggression from without, and created a tendency to dissension within.

At the head of the government in this earliest era of the middle ages, stood elective magistrates named Consuls, varying in number, but usually ranging from two to six, and differing in their term of office, though generally holding it for a year. These persons administered the laws, with or without assistant judges or assessors, superintended their execution, and in war commanded the civic militia, which was organized in divisions corresponding to those of the towns. But their powers were much limited by those Municipal Councils, which composed the most peculiar part of the machinery by which the free cities were governed. The number of these boards differed in the several towns, and even in the same town at different times; but the principle on which they were constructed does not seem to have admitted their extension to a greater number than four, and there were oftener no more than two. The simplest of them was the General Convention, or Parliament, of all the franchised citizens, the summoning of which, however, at all periods, and in all the towns, occurs only as an

extraordinary expedient, adopted in extreme emergencies. The sovereign powers of the community were more commonly exercised by a special representation, through the Great or General Council, composed of a selected number of the citizens, varying in different places, and occasionally shifting even in the same place from some hundreds to as many as three thousand. According to the ordinary rule, it was necessary to consult this body on general statutes, the imposition of taxes, the levying of war, and the concluding of peace and of alliances; it commonly named the magistrates, judges, and commissioners sent abroad, and also chose the members of the other councils. The next of these was the Special Council, whose number was generally one-fourth of that assigned to the great one. It usually possessed the initiative in all matters to be moved before the larger council, on which it thus served as a continual check. But in some towns a similar check was imposed on the executive by the appointment of a fourth board, called the Consiglio della Credenza, or Council of Trust and Secresy, which constituted a committee of finance, of foreign affairs, and of general control.*

This state of things, the natural result of that free spirit which we have seen springing up amidst the ruins of the Frankish empire, amounted, then, to a real republican independence of the cities; and, although there were recognised prerogatives of the empire limiting in some degree the liberty of the citizens, yet none of these encroached on it at all materially. In numerous instances the office of the imperial Count had been committed to the bishop of the diocese, who seldom claimed within the cities any farther power than that of granting investiture to the magistrates elected by the community. In all other cases, if the old counts had not been powerful enough to make themselves

* Sismondi, tome i. p. 378-390. Hallam, vol. i. p. 337-346. Savigny, vol. iii. p. 90-103. Raumer's Hohenstaufen, vol. v. p. 123-131.

petty princes, they disappeared altogether. The emperors, in their occasional visits to Italy, exercised, during their stay, the admitted prerogatives of their crown, but these became dormant the moment they re-crossed the Alps; and attempts to leave imperial lieutenants behind were very seldom successful.

Viewing the free cities, then, as advancing rapidly both in industry, wealth, and independence, during the eleventh century and the first half of the twelfth, we reach the time of Frederic Barbarossa's election to the empire. Certain prerogatives were frankly conceded to him by the imperial towns, although there was much ground for dispute in the application of some of the acknowledged principles. It was admitted that the emperor had a right to legislate for the whole country; but it was truly alleged that he could not lawfully do so except in public diets of the kingdom, a measure to which the German princes had been always most reluctant to resort, while differences were also likely to arise as to the constitution of the Italian diets. It was admitted that in certain cases the subjects were bound to defray the maintenance of the imperial armies in Italy; but, while the emperor claimed the performance of this obligation as due on all occasions of wars or encampments within the kingdom, many wished to restrict it to the solitary case of his march to his coronation. The sovereign's right to grant fiefs, and to summon the vassals for military service, was not likely to create much dispute; and the cities appear to have been even willing to recognise his power of nominating supreme judges, as well as that of leaving among them lieutenants, to protect his rights and represent his person. But yet it is true, that, if all these principles had come into operation, the cities would have found their freedom confined within limits considerably narrower than those to which they had long been practically accustomed; and therefore their leaders, feeling their own strength, were probably not displeased when Frederic's conduct absolved them from

the necessity of solving these constitutional questions. There seems to be no reason for doubting, that he claimed over his Italian kingdom, not merely the prerogatives of the Germanic Empire, but the absolute and unconditional power of the Roman Cæsars.*

Milan, the largest city of Central Lombardy, was the first to take arms, with the aid of some towns allied with or dependent on it; the German host marched across the Alps to quell the sedition, and was joined by some Italian municipalities, as well as by the Marquis of Montferrat and Count of Savoy. Two campaigns were fought, and the insurgent Milan was surrendered on a treaty, by which the emperor granted to it the most important of its demands. Immediately, in the year 1158, an imperial diet was summoned at Roncaglia, where Frederic, turning against the Milanese, as it has been suspected, an insidious advice which their leaders had given him with reference to some other towns, openly broke the agreement. Supported by subservient Italian vassals, and faithful German barons, he declared that no privileges should be acknowledged as belonging to any cities, except such as they could establish by the exhibition of imperial charters. This was in truth annulling their whole polity at a blow; but, for greater certainty, it was expressly enacted that the civic magistrates should thenceforth be named by the emperors, requiring only a subsequent consent of the community, which it was hoped there would be little difficulty in evading.† At the close of the diet commissioners appeared at Milan to nominate the consuls: the excited people rose and expelled them and their followers. The flame of revolt spread over all Lombardy, except in those towns which had received special privileges from Barbarossa as the price of their aid or neutrality; the country was desolated by the Germans, and in 1162 Milan, taken by assault, was rased to its foundations.

* Antichità Longobardico-Milanesi, tom. i. p. 248. Raumer, vol. ii. p. 19-23; vol. v. p. 87. Hallam, vol. i. p. 347.

† Savigny, vol. iii. p. 105-109. Sismondi, tome ii. p. 105-107.

Its dispersed citizens roused the spirit of resistance throughout all the north of Italy, and their mission of revenge was powerfully aided by the oppression of those foreign magistrates whom, with the name of Podestà, Frederic set over the subdued cities. The Veronese march led the way in forming a systematic confederacy, which was immediately joined by all the large towns of Central Lombardy (with a single exception), and on the south by Bologna and Ancona. In 1167 this union received permanent strength by the act of fifteen towns, which subscribed the famous League of Lombardy, pledging themselves to co-operate for the maintenance of their wonted privileges. These were, Venice, Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, Ferrara, Brescia, Bergamo, Cremona, Milan, Lodi, Piacenza, Parma, Modena, and Bologna; and new names were speedily added to the list, embracing, among others, several Piedmontese communities, particularly Novara and Vercelli. The cities of the league did not claim absolute independence: they demanded only that they should be allowed to exercise, each within its own district, through magistrates elected by themselves, and according to use and wont, the full powers of the old imperial counts. But under the clause of use and wont in this definition, were avowedly included the rights of administering the municipal finances, of framing statutes binding on all citizens, of exercising uncontrolled and unappealed jurisdiction, civil and criminal, of fortifying the town, and of making peace and war.

These demands were scornfully rejected; but the emperor, thus engaged with insufficient means in a foreign and obstinate war, was obliged to strengthen himself by alliances in Italy which aided the cause of freedom scarcely less than the civic league. For in taking advantage of the jealousies that reigned between the towns, in order to attach some of them to his own interests, he had to purchase their assistance by granting them charters differing very little from the claims of the revolted communities. By this policy, he was

able to form a strong Ghibelline party in the north of Italy, at the head of which stood Pavia, the inveterate enemy of Milan, seconded after a time by Lodi, Cremona, Parma, and smaller places. But this faction was most widely spread in Piedmont, where, supported by the great nobles, it soon numbered the towns of Turin, Ivrea, Asti, Alba, Tortona, Acqui, and Casale.*

The Lombard confederates, rebuilding Milan, and founding Alessandria as a refuge for the fugitives from other towns, engaged boldly in a war against the whole force of the empire and its allies. The contest, enduring several years, was marked by many vicissitudes, and by many acts of patriotic heroism, especially in the sieges of Alessandria and Ancona; and in the year 1176 it was closed by the fierce battle of Legnano, fought between the village of that name and the river Ticino, on the road from Milan to the Lago Maggiore. The Milanese Carroccio, a car bearing the ponderous standard of the city, and guarded by a chosen company of three hundred, was surrounded by the imperial troops: another Milanese band, called the Company of Death, composed of nine hundred young men serving on horseback, and sworn to perish rather than retreat, charged the enemy with irresistible fury, captured the royal banner, and compelled the Redbeard himself to an ignominious flight. Italy was free.

In 1183 the peace of Constance confirmed the Lombard cities in the privileges already described, specifying only certain restrictions, of which the most important were the following: a periodical oath of homage to the empire, an investiture of the magistrates by an imperial legate, the appointment of an imperial court of appeal in civil causes, and the exaction of some taxes, redeemable by a fixed annual payment.† As the in-

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* Sismondi, chap. x. xi. Hallam, vol. i. p. 354. Raumer, vol. v. pp. 90, 91. Denina, Istoria della Italia Occidentale, 1809; tom. i. p. 154.

† The practical effect of the peace of Constance admits of no question; but there is some dispute as to the exact meaning of its

fluence of the empire in Italy waxed feeble, these limitations gradually fell into disuse, and at length served no other purpose than to found assertions of prerogative for those lords whom we shall soon see enslaving the towns. In the mean time, the benefit of the league and the peace was communicated to the cities of Tuscany, which from intimidation had remained neutral, as well as to those towns which had openly joined the imperial forces. Genoa, like its maritime rival Pisa, had stood aloof; and Venice, with its own selfish caution, had early made a private composition with Frederic. The Peace of Constance farther recognised the League of Lombardy as a lawful association, and permitted its continuance; but the jealous cities unwisely let slip this favourable opportunity of consolidating the independence of Italy by a federative union.

During two or three generations, however, their prosperity flowed on as rapidly as before. Venice, Genoa, and Pisa extended their trade, then the first in Europe. Manufactures, especially those of silk and wool, made great advances, not only in Lombardy, but in Tuscany, where Florence likewise gave a useful example by the establishment of her celebrated banking-houses. The architectural monuments of Venice and Pisa, erected in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, still attest the greatness of the Italian republics during their vision of liberty; and the canals and other improvements in the Lombard plain, if less showy, are not really less convincing proofs. In 1288 the city of Milan is said to have contained 200,000 inhabitants, and, with its district, 8000 mounted men-at-arms besides other soldiers: while the district contained 150 castles with their annexed villages. Many new towns were founded between the revolution and the end of the thirteenth century; and in Piedmont alone, which was far from being either so

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terms, especially in regard to the investitures. Compare Muratori, Annali, tom. vii. p. 43; Sismondi, tome ii. p. 243-246; Savigny, vol. iii. p. 110-114; Raumer, vol. ii. p. 278; and vol. v. p. 89. The treaty itself is annexed to the common editions of the Corpus Juris.

free or so prosperous as the provinces farther to the east, we can name of these fourteen at least, among which are, Mondovi, Coni, Carmagnola, and Cherasco, with other places important at the present day.

The ruin of the Republics was effected by two co-operating causes; their hatred towards each other, and the hatred equally bitter which, within the walls of every city, ranged the nobles against the people. These social evils usually manifested themselves in two successive stages, the second of which was fatal to liberty in all those cases where it had survived the first.

The earliest stage was the introduction of that singular officer who, like Barbarossa's lieutenants, was known by the name of Podestà. This functionary, at first appearing occasionally like the Roman dictator, but soon becoming in most of the cities quite permanent, was usually nominated either by the Constituent Parliament or by the Great Council; and he superseded all the ordinary magistrates, the military officers, and sometimes even the judges. The reason for appointing him was the jealousy entertained by the commonalty towards the richer citizens and nobles; and the chief peculiarity of his office lay in this, that he was necessarily a stranger, usually chosen from among the nobility for the sake of ensuring military skill, but strictly excluded, during his term of office, from forming any intimate connexions in the city which he came to govern. The duty most anxiously expected from him, was the execution of that summary justice on the lawless barons, which we have seen Brancaleone enforcing at Rome. By these and similar acts of authorized violence, the commonalty had acquired before the middle of the thirteenth century a decided predominance in all the great Lombard towns: their power was always used severely, and on several occasions they banished the nobles in a body. But the Podestà often became too strong for both parties. He sometimes secured his election during several years, or even for life, after which he was truly prince of the

city; and powerful barons were repeatedly able to obtain this office in several communities at once, performing its functions by deputies.*

If independence survived this attack, the next peril speedily approached. The officers and councils of the "Commune" or General Community were disowned by the Commonalty; who, assisted by the organization of the guilds, whose members formed the greater part of their body, constituted themselves into a separate association, styling themselves the Popolo, or People, passing their own laws, refusing obedience to all others, and electing their own office-bearers, at the head of whom stood the Capitano del Popolo, or Captain of the People. In this crisis the nobles of some towns retired from public life; those of others, unless prevented, as they often were, by decrees passed for the purpose, made themselves commoners by enrolment in the guilds. Every where there arose an anomalous constitution, under which those towns that had not become the subjects of their Podestà or their more powerful republican neighbours, were enslaved by their new Captain of the Commons.

A very few words will explain the situation of Middle and Upper Italy about the end of the thirteenth century, the epoch at which for the present we leave the history of the country.

The cities of Tuscany, whose Guelf league in the pontificate of Innocent III. was led by Florence, and opposed by a counter league headed by the Ghibelline Pisa, retained their republican institutions; and several of them, such as Pistoia, Volterra, Cortona, and Perugia in the Florentine federation, with Lucca, Arezzo, and Siena in the Pisan, were remarkable both for their prosperity and for the excellence of the institutions which had been established even by some of the smallest among them. The maritime republics of Venice and Genoa

* Savigny, vol. iii. p. 117-120. Raumer, vol. v. p. 256. Muratori, Antichità Estensi, tom. i. p. 389; tom. ii. p. 25.

were likewise free; as was the case also with those towns of the Genoese territory which had not been made dependent either by their great commercial neighbour, or by one or two counts of the district. The political institutions of all these cities, so far as they are important enough to be noticed, will find a place in the next period, which was that of their greatest prosperity.

Most of the other republics had lost their independence before the year 1300, and all of them before 1350. Some had been directly subjugated either by the Podestà or the Captain of the People, or by other powerful men for whose enterprises internal anarchy had made room; and these new sovereigns, usually calling themselves Signori or Lords of the cities, founded hereditary principalities, whose permanence varied to a great extent. Other towns, having been first subjected by their republican neighbours, passed with them into the hands of the new princes, under whom the north of Italy every where exhibited a marked tendency towards the formation of a few large principalities.

Some details as to the constitutional history of the principal towns in Lombardy, will at once enlarge our knowledge regarding the principles of their internal polity, and serve as a useful introduction to the annals of the succeeding ages.*

By the constitution of Milan, as it presents itself soon after 1100, the right of active citizenship and of attendance in the General Parliament was vested in two classes; the ecclesiastics, and those laymen who were heads of families. The commoners were usually called Negotiatores, and belonged chiefly but not exclusively to the class of traders and artisans; the nobles, as in most

* For the constitutional history of the Italian cities during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Raumer, in his History of the Hohenstaufen Princes (vol. v. p. 151-255), has accumulated a mass of curious materials, which requires considerable sifting, but probably indicates all that is likely to be ever known as to the special institutions of the several towns.

other towns, were divided into Capitanei and Valvassores. In the middle of the century appears a Special or Secret Council, whose members appear to have been principally nobles; and the Consuls, whose numbers varied, seem likewise to have been usually taken from that order; but, soon after that time, the lower members of the trading class completed an organization which made their office-bearers exceedingly powerful. For, in the first place, in 1198, the commoners introduced a Podestà as the regular head of the administration, and effected other changes still more dangerous. Upon this, the butchers, bakers, and other lower artisans formed themselves into a corporation called the Society of Saint Ambrose, which succeeded in obtaining not merely courts and officers of its own, but a specified share in the public revenue and the general government; and the merchants and richer commoners sought, with some success, to neutralize the new club by procuring similar privileges for one of their own, which they called the Motta. The nobles, justly alarmed for the influence of their order, but divided by jealousies among themselves, completed the confusion by instituting two similar societies, composed respectively of the higher nobility and the lower. This vicious polity led, by necessary consequence, to incessant broils, which all attempts at composition failed to appease; and, in 1240, the commoners became all-powerful by the appointment of Pagano della Torre, as Captain of the People. The continued resistance of the nobles led to repeated decrees of banishment against the whole body; but their subjugation was no sooner completed than the Motta and the corporation of Saint Ambrose quarrelled among themselves. A property-tax, made necessary by the embarrassment of the city-exchequer, was opposed by the former, who leagued with the nobles, and with the family Della Torre, who had renounced their rank for the sake of civic influence. In 1264, one of that house was declared perpetual Lord of Milan, as well as of those towns and villages which, long dependent on that city, had been usually allowed by it to

choose their own magistrates, with powers of administration and a limited jurisdiction. Della Torre, soon adding to his princedom Bergamo, Vercelli, and Como, paved the way for the wide sovereignty afterwards wielded by his family's great rivals the Visconti, who, from the year 1277, were lords of Milan and its dependencies.*

The constitution of Verona was distinguished by several interesting peculiarities. Adopting a policy very common in Lombardy, the city, from an early date, encouraged the vassals and villeins of the neighbouring barons to enter its community, by conferring the right of citizenship on all persons who had resided two years within the walls. But the inhabitants at large seem not to have possessed any general parliament; and the consular government gave way about 1178 to a foreign Podestà, who was appointed by a Council of Eighty, the only board administrative or deliberative of which we discover any traces in those times. For a place at that board, or admission to any public office, those citizens only were qualified whose names were found in a list annually prepared; and, for insertion in it, a citizen was required to show either that he enjoyed a yearly income of a thousand Veronese lire, or that he possessed a complete suit of armour, or thirdly, that he derived his descent from persons of noble birth, who had served the community. When the commons waxed powerful, this aristocratic polity naturally excited discontents, which in 1225 were farther inflamed by their Podestà Eccelino da Romano. This man, under the forms of a mock constitution, dexterously contrived for seeming to give all privileges to the commons, and yet leaving no real power to any order of the citizens, was now lord of the city and its district. In 1259, Verona was freed from the cruelty of the third Eccelino, whose usual title,

* Antichità Longobardico-Milanesi tom. i. p. 234, 256. Raumer, vol. v. p. 183-193 Sismondi, tome ii. pp. 291, 446; tome iii. pp. 50, 132, 272-277, 431-454.

The Tyrant, does barely justice to his crimes; but it escaped only that it might fall, the year after, into the hands of Mastino, the founder of the celebrated house Della Scala.*

In Mantua, after the consuls had given way to the Podestà, we find the functions of that officer controlled, as in many other Italian towns, by an elective board of Anziani or Elders; and the Great Council is stated to have been open both to nobles and commoners. The city was reduced in 1275 by the Buonaccorsi, whom it drove out in 1328, to supply their place by the house of Gonzaga, afterwards so eminent. Many other towns fell, in the course of the thirteenth century, under dominations equally ephemeral. Such was the fate of Ravenna, which has bequeathed to us a most curious and valuable series of statutes, illustrating better than any other published documents of the times, the state of society and manners, and showing the city to have had a constitution tending strongly to aristocracy. In its Great Council, the number of members was only 250, while the Special Council had 70; and its Podestà was chosen by a process which, combining in repeated operations the casting of lots with the voting of the Great Council, was altogether very like the favourite modes of procedure in Venice. From 1275 it was subject to the family of the Novello da Polenta.† Bologna, many of whose constitutional peculiarities were exceedingly remarkable, suffered in 1228 a revolution, which affords one of the most detailed examples of the triumph of the Popolo over the Commune. In 1273, again, the tragical deaths of the Bolognese lovers, Imilda Lambertazzi and Bonifazio Gieremei, indicated those fierce passions, which, as in the murder of Buondelmonti at Florence in 1250, so often transformed political animosities into mortal family

* Raumer, vol. v. p. 249-252. Sismondi, tome ii. p. 287-293; tome iii. pp. 10, 111, 119, 199-220.

† See the very rare work of Fantuzzi, Monumenti Ravennati, 6 tom. 1801-1804; tom. i. (Prefaz.); tom. iv. p. 15-154. Raumer, vol. v. p. 208-213. Sismondi, tome iv. p. 426.

feuds. In 1337, Bologna fell under its Captain of the People, named Taddeo Pepoli, who in 1340 transferred his rights over it to the Papal See.* Padua chiefly merits notice for the democratic spirit of its polity. The General Parliaments are mentioned as late as 1256; and the duties of a council of secresy, as advisers or controllers of the Captain, were discharged by a board of Anziani or Savii, seven of whom were chosen by each quarter of the city. After having been tyrannized over by Eccelino da Romano, it was permanently subjugated by the unfortunate family of the Carrara, who were its lords from 1318.† Piacenza presents, in the annals of its constitution, nothing that interests us so much as the memoirs of the family of Scotti, who, from the position of wealthy citizens, rose in the latter half of the thirteenth century to be its absolute lords, by a cautious progress which one is almost tempted to consider as nationally characteristic. For, although we must be allowed to smile at the clumsily invented genealogy which claimed for them a descent from an Earl Douglas, a brother of the Scottish king Achaius, and a companion-in-arms of Charlemagne, yet the common opinion is, that their founders in Italy were really adventurers belonging to the border-clan of Scott.‡ The marquises of Este, the only princely house in Lombardy which, with the exception of some Piedmontese, could truly boast of ancient distinction in lineage, were also among the earliest to establish an absolute sovereignty. Reducing Ferrara in 1240, and Modena in 1289, they soon added to these the town and district of Reggio.

So far as it is possible to judge of the internal state of the Piedmontese cities, from the very scanty information

* Savigny, vol. iii. p. 121-135. Savioli, Annali Bolognesi, 1784-1795, passim. Raumer, vol. v. p. 152-169. Sismondi, tome ii. pp. 253, 452; tome iii. pp. 101-108, 442, 466; tome v. p. 270-276.

† Raumer, vol. v. p. 194. Sismondi, tome iii. pp. 16, 199-208; tome iv p 401-416.

‡ Memorie di Piacenza [Poggiali], 1757, tom. i. p. 259-282; tom. v. p. 20, &c.

which is accessible in regard to them, their municipal institutions do not appear to have at all developed themselves with that activity which we have remarked in the communities of the other provinces. They were kept in check, as we have seen, by the powerful counts and marquises whose territories extended every where around; and even the most energetic among them did not seek to gain strength so often by self-dependence and internal organization, as by placing themselves under the protection of the bishops, and setting up the authority of these ecclesiastical superiors as a shield against the usurpations of the warlike barons. In such a position, accordingly, we find Turin, which, repeatedly in revolt against its counts of the house of Savoy, and once imprisoning the whole family for several years, submitted without resistance to the administration of its bishop. The temporal power of this prelate extended in more than one period over the greater part of the old principality of Piedmont; and an authority little less extensive was exercised by the Bishop of Vercelli, whose episcopal city, subject to no count or other hereditary ruler, was in the thirteenth century the most powerful and independent town in Western Lombardy.* Novara probably ranked second, and Alessandria, the city founded by the Lombard League, classes itself, through its history if not by its position, with this region rather than that to which it owed its origin. The constitution given to it was singular, on account of its creating a peculiar species of nobility. The whole community, whether previously ranking as nobles or commoners, were divided into two races: the first embraced the founders of the town and their descendants; the second contained all other citizens: men of the former race were alone eligible as Anziani; and the great council, the tribunals, and all official boards, were also half filled up from its members. The turbulence of this city may be estimated by the aid of one extract from its annals. After its citizens,

* Denina, Italia Occident. tom. i. pp. 141-144, 186-190, 203-205.

along with Pavia, Tortona, Asti, and other towns, had nominated as its lord Guillaume marquis of Montferrat, they rebelled against him, seized his person, and confined him in an iron cage till the year 1292, when he died.*

In the end of the thirteenth century, then, although several of the larger Piedmontese cities were apparently as far independent as they had ever been, yet the Counts of Savoy on the one hand, and the Visconti of Milan on the other, were encroaching rapidly on their territories; and all the communities were prepared for sinking with little opposition into absolute subjection under these powerful princes. But, in certain particulars, the situation of most of them, previously less favourable than that of the freer Lombard towns, was now likely to be much superior. Those among them which speedily became parts of the dominions, either of the Counts of Savoy or Marquises of Montferrat, did so without any violent revolution; and seemed in many respects to be only re-entering upon relations that had been for a time suspended. Their nobles and other persons of the higher orders retained the same position which they had always held, and were thus prepared to form a bulwark for the community against attacks of the new sovereign; the general connexion of the cities and districts with each other was in like manner undisturbed; the feudal institutions, if not deeply rooted, were at least widely diffused; and, both in Montferrat, and in the dominions of the Counts of Savoy, there were Diets or provincial meetings of the states, which were calculated to serve as no inconsiderable checks on the monarchical prerogative.† On the fall of those Italian cities that had been more decidedly free, every thing presented an aspect quite dissimilar to this. Feudalism had been stopped in its early growth; no diets, general or provincial, had been held since the defeat of the emperors; and the usurping princes were thus freed from all the risks that

* Raumer, vol. v. p. 151. Denina, tom. i. pp. 185, 189, 232. Sismondi, tome iv. p. 218.

† Denina, tom. i. p. 248; tom. ii. p. 125.

their power might have experienced from such bodies, the rude beginnings of national representation and public freedom. Within the cities, likewise, the dissensions which had preceded their overthrow, removing all partial privileges, and all real distinctions of rank, and in most places laying the nobles at the feet of the third estate, did by this very means weaken all orders of the community, and generate that spiritless apathy with which the subjects of the Italian principalities submitted to the rule of their despotic masters.

THE STATE OF SOCIETY.

During the three centuries preceding the fourteenth, religion, either in its substance or in its forms, was more closely woven into the history of the world than it has been at any subsequent period. The Italians, who rejected the knightly portion of chivalry, eagerly imbibed its wild and ignorant devotion; and the church, its doctrines, its rites, and its ministers, mingle in every scene of the troubled times. The monastic orders continued to flourish, and their connexion with the aristocracy was cemented both by the high birth of many monks, and by their institutions, especially that common one so useful for both parties in an age of violence, which made noblemen accept the office of Advocates for particular monasteries or churches, whose claims they were bound to defend both in courts of law and by force of arms.* Pilgrimages were favoured, and the severities of the old penitential canons commuted for pecuniary indulgences.

There arose, it is true, much resistance to the civil claims of the ecclesiastics, especially their demand of

* The Gonfalone, or Standard of the church, borne in processions by the Avvocato, gave name to the noble family of Confalonieri, standard-bearers of the cathedral of Milan. Muratori, Antich. Ital. tom. iii. p. 356. Count Federigo, the representative of the house, having been in 1820 consigned to an Austrian dungeon for political offences, along with the poet Pellico and others, was released under the amnesty proclaimed on the Emperor Ferdinand's coronation in the autumn of 1838.

exemption both from taxes and lay-jurisdiction: and we find some curious instances in which, amidst such disputes, the sacred character of the clergy was quite forgotten. In Rome we have noticed remarkable outbreaks of this spirit; but there were many also in other places. In 1218, when the Bishop of Fano refused to contribute money for fortifying the town, the Podestà brought him to reason by dint of hunger, forbidding all citizens to sell provisions to him. In 1224, the Bishop of Florence laid the city under a spiritual interdict: the community retorted by passing against him a sentence of civil outlawry; and the pope was not able to punish the bold act by any thing more severe than a reprimand and a moderate fine. But these cases are deviations from the spirit of the times, which was deeply devotional, and this temper it is that we see illustrated by the most frequent examples.

In the eleventh century there arose several monastic foundations which are still highly interesting. The Benedictine monastery of La Cava, so picturesquely situated between Naples and Salerno, and so famous for the records in its library, was founded by Adelfero of Salerno, who died in 1059. Bruno of Cologne, instituting the Carthusian rule in 1086, introduced it into Calabria in 1090. The two celebrated establishments of Camaldoli and Vallombrosa, situated among the woods of the highest Tuscan Apennines, were subjected to new regulations of peculiar harshness, adapted to the general order of the Benedictines.

Saint Romuald, who founded the rule of Camaldoli in the year 1012, was a native of Ravenna, and of noble birth.* In early life he attended his father in a duel about a heritage: the adversary, a kinsman of the family, was killed on the spot, and Romuald, filled with horror, fled into the south of Italy, where he entered the monastery of Monte Cassino, to expiate the slaughter by a penance of forty days, in the way usual with those who

* Helyot, Histoire des Ordres Monastiques, 1714; tome v. p. 144.

had themselves shed blood. The monks wrought on the susceptible youth: while he lay praying by night in the abbey-church with one of them at his side, a vision of Saint Apollinaris in glory illuminated the place; and the awed penitent took the vows. The other brethren attempted to kill him, on account of his strictness and rising fame; but, after several adventures, including the conversion of a homicidal Doge of Venice, we find him living as a recluse in Catalonia. On its being rumoured that the saint intended to leave Spain, the pious peasants of the district resolved to murder him, that their country might possess at least the corpse of so holy a man: Romuald escaped by feigning madness, and returned to Ravenna, where he found that his father, who had become a monk, was tired of the cloister, and wished to return to the world. The dutiful son seized the old man, imprisoned him, fasted and prayed with him: the backslider was converted, repented of his guilt, and, worn out by his enforced penance, gave up the ghost. After building several monasteries, in none of which would the ecclesiastics conform to his strict rules, the saint retired to the Apennines of Tuscany, where, in the little meadow of Camaldoli, watered by seven springs, he founded his renowned order. Having afterwards spent several years in unbroken silence, he retired to one of his own convents in Camerino, where he had prophesied that he should die, and no man see his death. One evening, a little before sunset, he ordered the two monks who attended him to leave him till daybreak, and then return to say matins: in the night they broke into his cell and found him lying dead. His monastery at Camaldoli has survived the changes of our own times, though with shorn revenues and diminished numbers. We reach it by tracing a little stream upwards into dells among the woody mountains till we come to a flat meadow, where, on a spot originally called Fontebuono, stands the principal convent, first erected as an infirmary and noviciate-house, but soon appropriated to those brethren who could not bear the seve-

rities and the nine-months' winter of the Sacro Eremo or hermitage of the founder. This holy retreat is approached by a steep ascent of a mile from the abbey, through a deep rocky ravine, lined with huge pines, and watered by the dashing rivulet: the hermitage, an enclosure with a church, contains about forty cells, and the two or three monks who still reside there are solitaries, meeting only for worship. The rest of the brethren are cœnobites; but their rules likewise are extremely severe.

The order of Vallombrosa was founded about the year 1039 by Giovanni Gualberto, son of the lord of Petroio, in the Tuscan Val di Pesa. His brother Ugo having been killed, his father strictly charged him to execute vengeance for the crime; and one day, riding to Florence with his squires, Giovanni met the murderer in a narrow pass where neither could turn back. While he prepared to stab him, the unhappy man threw himself at his feet, imploring pardon for the love of Jesus Christ crucified: the young avenger of blood hesitated, stretched out his hand, and declared that he did pardon his enemy, as he hoped to be himself forgiven. After this, entering the church of San Miniato on the hill close to Florence, he knelt down to pray before an altar, when the figure of the crucifix bowed, or seemed to bow, its head, as if thanking him for his victory over himself. He immediately retired to the adjacent Benedictine monastery, and there, at the age of eighteen, took the vows in spite of the resistance of his family. His abbey of Vallombrosa, situated, like Camaldoli, far up among the Apennines, is frequently visited by travellers; and its meadow, enclosed by rocks, mountains, and deep pine woods, from whose outer edge we look over the Upper Valdarno, is believed to have furnished to Milton hints for his Paradise. The Vallombrosan convent, like that of Camaldoli, was originally a hermitage, occupying the site now covered by the Paradisino, on a steep woody cliff. The extensive cloisters which stand on the plain at the foot of the rock were erected as a hospice, and a lodge

for the novices, whose year was spent in keeping swine and in other menial occupations. Their entrance into the order, too, was prefaced by three days and nights spent in lying on the earth, covered with the cowl, motionless, silent, and meditating on the mysteries of the passion; but the strictness of the rules has now probably decreased nearly as much as the wealth of the establishment. Giovanni founded several religious houses, and is said to have worked in one of them a miracle which is worth recording for the sake of its motive. Having been told that the abbot had accepted from a dying man a deed of gift which left the testator's children in beggary, he went to the convent, demanded the parchment, tore it in pieces, and prayed that God and Saint Peter would punish the sinners. He had scarcely crossed the threshold when the buildings caught fire; but the indignant saint did not condescend so much as to look back on the flames which destroyed them.*

The reformed rules of Camaldoli and Vallombrosa had been mainly produced as counterpoises to the increasing laxness of discipline among the clergy; and this motive continually acquired additional strength, especially when, besides single protestors (like the monk Arnold of Brescia, burned at Rome in 1155), the tenets of the Albigenses and other heretics had spread from Piedmont into Tuscany and Romagna. In the beginning of the thirteenth century, the two orders of Begging Friars were instituted, who bound themselves to abjure the snare of wealth, for their order as well as for the individuals, and, in their several spheres, to combat the dissenters from the church. The Dominicans, established in Spain in 1215, were to preach to the people, and to act as inquisitors and avengers of the faith; the Franciscans, founded in Italy in 1210, were to win the laity by poverty, purity of life, and zeal in teaching. The Inquisition, under the management of Dominic, was organized, and the infamous crusade against the French

* Helyot, Histoire des Ordres Monastiques, tome v. p. 305.

Albigenses planned by Innocent III., who (one feels reluctant to avow the fact) sold his protection to the cities of the Lombard League by stipulating that they should punish the heretics. Milan began its persecutions in 1228; and the Veronese friar Pietro, usually called Saint Peter Martyr, heading the Dominicans, preached fire and slaughter through Lombardy till he was murdered by the kinsmen of one of his victims.

The Franciscan order was founded by the enthusiastic Giovanni Bernardoni, who, born in 1182, was canonized by the name of Saint Francis, and whose short life of voluntary suffering interests us through the mist of fable. His grave is in the singular old church of his order in his native town of Assisi; and on the rocky edge of a high Tuscan mountain, a few miles beyond Bibbiena, stands his famous convent of Laverna, still inhabited by a favourite congregation of his disciples. Beneath one of its buildings is a sacred chapel, enclosing the cave in which he is said to have received the Stigmata, or five wounds of Christ, miraculously impressed on his body. The story, attested by the pope of the day, is canonical;* but this is not the case with some of the local superstitions still forming the stock of the copartnery; such as the well-filled cabinet of relics, or the pretty story (recorded in inscribed tablets on the side of the path) of the inspired birds which guided Francis to the forest on the rock, where his monastery was destined to stand.

The execution of the laws may be appreciated from two facts. Letters of reprisals for robberies committed upon traders on the road were in constant use, and the system was at its worst towards the end of the thirteenth century. The trial by ordeal also continued in all its forms, and that by battle became more and more bloody in every new century. In 1064 Saint John Gualbert figures in one of those ordeal-stories, the facts of which compel us to impute fraud to the one party or the

Helyot, Histoire dés Ordres Monastiques, tome vii. chap. 1.

other. The saint charged the Bishop of Florence with having been simoniacally elected; and a pile of wood, erected in the court-yard of Settimo, a Vallombrosan monastery near Florence, was burned to a red-heat, a passage of a fathom in width being left in the middle. Pietro, a monk of the convent, after praying, and giving the kiss of peace to his brethren, took off his sandals, and, walking slowly along the passage amidst the glowing embers, came out without mark or hurt: Pope Alexander II. deposed the accused prelate, and the monk was made bishop of Albano and a cardinal. The ordeal of battle was not shunned by the ecclesiastics of either sex. About the year 1014, the lands of Anghiera, on the Lago Maggiore, were claimed at once by a certain Count Hugo and by Euphrasia, abbess of the Pavian monastery of San Felice; and the question was fought in presence of the Emperor Henry II., in the precincts of the old palace of Pavia. "By the aid of divine grace" (as the deed has it) the champion of the abbess conquered, and an imperial charter adjudged the lands to the convent. In a later story, the date of which is about 1200, one appeal to heaven was neutralized by another. A young female named Galeazza, belonging to the neighbourhood of Pavia, was accused of having poisoned her brother: she denied the charge, and was appointed to defend herself by a champion. Love or money procured for her a defender, but he was vanquished, and the unhappy girl was sentenced to be instantly burned. Lanfranc, the archbishop, who died a year or two before, had worked many miracles; and Galeazza, on her way to execution, and after she was placed bound in the midst of the flames, called incessantly on his name. The fire refused to touch her; burning thorns were heaped on her in vain; she was released, and went with her champion and kinsfolk to prostrate herself at the tomb of her sainted rescuer. The priest of the parish attested the miracle upon oath, and Bernard, then archbishop of Pavia, inserted it in his biography

of his predecessor, which is still extant.* Championship in these judicial combats was, while the weapons were staves, a regular profession. The statutes of Verona, dated in 1228, fix a maximum price for each piece of work; and in Padua, as late at least as the fall of the tyrant Eccelino, the hired bravos were masked. But these trained fighters must have been paid well if the magistracies had put in execution that law of the times, which condemned the beaten champion to the loss of his right hand for his presumed perjury.†

Villeinage, which had become gradually rarer in Italy during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, disappeared altogether in the fourteenth. The struggles of the towns for their independence aided this reform, for in several instances the municipalities freed large numbers of male serfs on condition of receiving their military services. Thus in 1256 the Commune of Bologna purchased and emancipated all the villeins of the district, of both sexes, farther securing the good-will of the men by large donatives.‡ It has been lately observed that the enfranchisement of the serfs in Tuscany, and perhaps elsewhere, was attended with an effect which most historians have overlooked, but which, if it did take place extensively, must have exerted a wonderful influence on the revolutions of the period. Many of the villeins, it is said, became proprietors (subject to fixed yearly payments) of the grounds to which they had been attached, and there was thus formed a numerous class of petty landholders resembling that which, chiefly originating in the sixteenth century, still subsists in the duchy of Lucca.§ Under this system, Tuscan hamlets

* See the Collection of the Bollandists; Acta Sanctorum Junii (die 23), tom. iv. p. 628, in vitâ S. Lanfranci.

† Muratori, Antich. Ital. Dissert. XXXIX. tom. ii.

‡ Ibid. Dissert. XIV. tom. i. p. 156.

§ Rumohr, Ursprung der Besitzlosigkeit des Colonen im neueren Toscana; Hamburg, 1830. Compare Muratori's Dissertation last cited; Raumer, vol. v. p. 364, &c. Consult also, for Romagna, the documents in Fantuzzi.

which now contain two or three households, became in the thirteenth century villages of one or two hundred souls ; and a vigorous race of free peasants were trained to fill the ranks of the Florentine or Sienese militia. But, at all events, such a state of possession did not survive the end of the thirteenth century, and the modern system of tenancy soon became general. Whatever the position of the peasantry was in relation to the soil, their intelligence and industry in those ages were remarkable ; and, particularly in Lombardy, agriculture was brought to very high excellence.

The spectacles of the middle ages,—the tournaments, pageants, and the like,—scarcely reached in Italy, till the fourteenth century, that importance which should deserve notice. In 1214 there was represented at Treviso a pageant of the Castle of Honour defended by ladies ; and in 1298 the Mystery of the Passion was acted in Friuli by ecclesiastics in the bishop's palace. Of Italian chivalry genuine examples will hardly be found, unless we choose to accept as such that odd exhibition which took place in 1282, when Charles of Anjou and Pedro of Aragon exchanged personal defiances, and agreed to decide the possession of Sicily by single combat at Bordeaux, under the eye of Edward I. of England as judge of the lists. Charles travelled to Gascony with a hundred knights, and waited a whole day for his adversary and the judge, neither of whom appeared.*

* Giannone, lib. xx. cap. 7. Rymer's Fœdera, vol. i. part 2. p. 621-624, edit. 1816.

CHAPTER III.

THE MIDDLE AGES.

Political History and State of Society.

SECOND PERIOD.

A. D. 1300—A. D. 1500.

STATE OF SOCIETY—Chaotic aspect of Morality—Religion —Pilgrimages—Ecclesiastical Reforms—Dissent from Catholicism—The Waldenses—Amusements—Warfare—The Condottieri. POLITICAL HISTORY—THE PAPAL STATES— —Secession to Avignon—Rienzi—The Schism of the West—Porcari—State of the Provinces—NAPLES AND SICILY—Robert the Wise—The two Joannas—The Aragonese—National Parliaments—THE PRINCIPALITIES OF LOMBARDY—Milan—The Visconti—The Sforza—Other Princedoms—THE MARITIME REPUBLICS—*Pisa*—Count Ugolino—Subjugation by Florence —*Genoa*—Wars—Constitution—Decay—*Venice*—Picture in the Fifteenth Century—Constitutional History—The Doge—The Grand Council—The Ten—Foreign Policy—Statistics—Tragical Incidents—New Constitutional Changes—The Three Inquisitors—Their Statutes—THE INLAND REPUBLICS OF TUSCANY—*The Smaller Cities*—Their Revolutions—Castruccio in Lucca—Oligarchies in Siena—*Florence*—Statistics—Constitution—Victory of Guelfism and Democracy—Magistracies —Parliaments—Barbarous Police—New Aristocracy—The Ciompi—Oligarchies—The Medici—Lorenzo the Magnificent—THE ISLANDS—*Corsica*—History and Administration—*Sardinia*—History—Representative Constitution. POLITICAL STATE OF ITALY IN 1500—The Great Monarchies of Europe—The French Invasion—Appropriations of Italy.

POPES.	*Secession to Avignon*, 1305.
1294. Boniface VIII. (Benedetto Gaetani)	1305. Clement V. (Bertrand de Goth)
1303. Benedict XI. (Niccolò Boccasini)	1316. John XXII. (Jacques d'Euse)

1334. Benedict XII. (Jacques Fournier)
1342. Clement VI. (Pierre Roger)
1352. Innocent VI. (Etienne d'Albert)
1362. Urban V. (Guillaume de Grisac)
1370. Gregory XI. (Pierre Roger)

The Secession ends, 1377.

Schism of the West, 1378-1417.

1 *Popes in Rome.*

1378. Urban VI. (Bartolommeo Prignano)
1389. Boniface IX. (Pietro Tomacelli)
1404. Innocent VII. (Cosmato de' Meliorati)
1406. Gregory XII. (Angelo Corrario)
1409. Alexander V. (Petrus Phylargyrius)
1410. John XXIII. (Balthassare Cossa)

2. *Anti-Popes in Avignon.*

1378. Clement VII. (Robert of Geneva)
1394. Benedict XIII. (Pedro de Luna)

Undisputed Series.

1417. Martin V. (Ottone Colonna)
1431. Eugenius IV. (Gabriele Condolmeri)
1447. Nicholas V. (Tommaso di Sarzana)
1455. Calixtus III. (Alfonso Borgia)
1458. Pius II. (Æneas Silvius Piccolomini)
1464. Paul II. (Pietro Barbo)
1471. Sixtus IV. (Francesco della Rovere)
1484. Innocent VIII. (Giambattista Cibo)
1492. Alexander VI. (Rodrigo Borgia)

NAPLES AND SICILY.

1. *Naples: House of Anjou continued.*

1309. Robert (The Wise)
1343. Joanna I.
1382. Charles III.
1386. Ladislaus
1414. Joanna II.

2. *Sicily: House of Aragon.*

1337. Peter II., king of Sicily
1342. Lodovico
1355. Frederic III.
1377. Maria
1402. Martin I., king of Aragon
1409. Martin II., king of Aragon
1412. Ferdinand, king of Aragon
1416. Alfonso I., king of Aragon

3. *Naples and Sicily: House of Aragon.*

1435. Alfonso I., king of Aragon
1458. Ferdinand I., king of the Two Sicilies
1494. Alfonso II.
1495. Ferdinand II.
1496. Frederic

PRINCES OF THE MILANESE.

1295. Matteo Visconti, lord of Milan
1322. Galeazzo Visconti
1328. Azzo Visconti
1339. Lucchino Visconti
1349. Gian Visconti
1354. Matteo II. — Bernabo-Galeazzo II.
1378. Gian-Galeazzo — Bernabo Visconti
1385. Gian-Galeazzo Visconti, duke of Milan in 1395
1402. Gian-Maria Visconti, duke
1412. Filippo-Maria Visconti, duke
1447. Francesco Sforza, duke from 1450
1466. Galeazzo-Maria Sforza, duke
1476. Gian-Galeazzo-Maria Sforza, duke
1494. Lodovico-Maria Sfòrza, duke

THE ESTE IN FERRARA, MODENA, AND REGGIO.

1293. Azzo VIII. marquis d'Este
1308. Folco
1317. Rinaldo—Obizo III.
1352. Aldrovandino III.
1361. Niccolò II.
1383. Alberto
1393. Niccolò III.
1441. Lionello
1450. Borso, first duke of Modena and Reggio (1452), of Ferrara (1471)
1471. Ercole I.

COUNTS AND DUKES OF SAVOY.

1285. Amadeus V., Le Grand, count
1323. Edouard
1329. Aymon
1343. Amadeus VI., Le Comte Verd
1383. Amadeus VII., Le Rouge
1391. Amadeus VIII., created duke in 1417
1451. Louis
1465. Amadeus IX.
1472. Philibert I., Le Chasseur
1482. Charles I., Le Guerrier
1489. Charles II.
1496. Philippe II., Sans Terre
1497. Philibert II., Le Beau

DOGES OF VENICE.

1289. Pietro Gradenigo, the 49th doge
1311. Marino Giorgi
1312. Giovanni Soranzo
1328. Francesco Dandolo
1339. Bartolommeo Gradenigo
1343. Andrea Dandolo
1354. Marino Falier
1355. Giovanni Gradenigo
1356. Giovanni Delfino
1361. Lorenzo Celsi
1365. Marco Cornaro
1367. Andrea Contarini
1382. Michiel Morosini
1382. Antonio Venier
1400. Michiel Steno
1414. Tommaso Mocenigo
1423. Francesco Foscari
1457. Pasqual Malipier
1462. Cristoforo Moro
1471. Niccolò Tron
1473. Niccolò Marcello
1474. Pietro Mocenigo
1476. Andrea Vendramin
1478. Giovanni Mocenigo
1485. Marco Barbarigo
1486. Agostino Barbarigo
1501. Leonardo Loredan, the 75th doge

In the middle of the fourteenth century all the Italian republics may be considered as already extinct, except Venice, Genoa, and the free towns of Tuscany. The petty sovereignties which rose on their ruins, in Central and Eastern Lombardy, were next in their turn destroyed; for, previously to the end of the century that followed, almost every one of these had been incorporated either into the states of the church, the territories of Venice, the principalities of the Este and Gonzaga, or the new dukedom of Milan. In like manner, the provinces of Piedmont were organized under the declining marquisate of Montferrat and the rising earldom of Savoy. The temporal kingdom of the popes enlarged itself as their spiritual power decayed. The

kingdom of Naples remained stationary in regard both to its institutions and its boundaries.

The great objects of interest between 1300 and 1500, are Venice and Florence, with Genoa and Pisa. During the early part of that period, nearly the whole commerce of Europe, and much of its manufactures, were centred in these four communities ; and, although the two latter, after a brief splendour, subsided into obscurity, yet the island-realm of the doges and the "fair city" on the Arno continued to flourish till the close of the middle ages. The internal history of these two commonwealths, so unlike in their character and polity, presents inexhaustible topics which never lose their attraction; and the constitutional changes of both proceed till the end of the fifteenth century, when Florence was virtually the kingdom of the Medici, and Venice had sunk into the grasp of its formidable oligarchy.

When in 1500 we leave Italy, we see the foot of the foreign spoiler already treading her vales. Weak in spirit as well as decaying in frame, she was about to be permanently subdued by the newly-consolidated monarchies of Transalpine Europe.

THE STATE OF SOCIETY.

But this active period cannot be to any useful extent appreciated by looking merely at the skeleton of its polity, or at those revolutions by which the children of the land passed, together with their soil, from one master to another. Its piety and irreligion,—its heroism and its crimes,—its enlightenment in a few with darkness in the many,—the pomp of its knightly courts which concealed vice and horror, and the wildness of its people which sometimes disguised wretchedness and sometimes flowed from exuberant delight,—these and other features of the times in Italy cannot be illustrated except by sketches from the life, for which we have here but a narrow canvass.

The mixed morality of the fourteenth century is depicted, with not more than the allowable exaggerations of poetry, in the pages of Dante and Boccaccio, which

exhibit the bravery, the patriotism, and the softer virtues of their time, in strange contrast with its fierceness and increasing licentiousness. When we pass to the end of the subsequent age, we find much improvement in the court of the Medici at Florence, but none in the papal palace of the Vatican, where crimes too foul to be named were acted openly by Rodrigo Borgia and his horrible children. Individual purity might be found, and rude heroism oftener; but those centuries, magnificent as their character was in art, and fine as their commencement and their close were in literature, may be more justly estimated from such insulated facts as do not exactly fall within the province of political history.

From the opening of this period, Florence was torn by two factions, the Neri and Bianchi, or Black and White Guelfs, names imported with the feud from Pistoia, where family animosities had caused incessant bloodshed.* In 1301, a son of Corso Donati, the leader of the Neri (that faction which, the year after, exiled the poet Dante), passing on horseback through the square of Santa Croce, had stopped to hear a Dominican of the convent who preached on the steps of the church. He there observed some of the other party riding along, headed by his own mother's brother, Niccolò de' Cerchi. Donati called his retainers, galloped after the Bianchi, assaulted them just beyond the city gate, slew his uncle, and was then cut down himself. In Romagna occurred a little later the tragical story of Dante's Francesca of Rimini; and her family in the next generation were disgraced by their chief, Bernardino da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, who, in the jubilee of 1350, beset the roads with his men-at-arms, robbed the male pilgrims, and carried off and dishonoured many of the females. The same region afterwards became even more wildly fierce. Early in the fifteenth century, it witnessed the melancholy fate of Parisina Malatesta of Rimini, the wife of

* See the curious picture of this desperate feud in Pistoia, drawn by Giovanni Villani, Historie Fiorentine, lib. viii. cap. 38; ap. Muratori, Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, tom. xiii. p. 368.

Niccolò D'Este, marquis of Ferrara; and that catastrophe was followed by another scarcely less dreadful. Galeotto Manfredi, lord of Faenza, having married Francesca Bentivoglio, daughter of the Prince of Bologna, not only was unfaithful to her, but treated her with cruelty. She fled to her father, was reconciled to her husband, and returned; but renewed severity and neglect soon irritated the haughty woman beyond forgiveness. Galeotto, being falsely informed that she was sick, went to visit her in her chamber: he was there attacked by four assassins; and, while he struggled with them, Francesca, leaping from the bed, stabbed him to the heart. The secret history of the Spanish family of the Borgia at Rome, in the end of the century, is too shocking to be taken as an example of a whole generation; but, in the very year in which Rodrigo, the most poisonous viper of that nest, was raised to the popedom, the Romans exhibited frightful instances of that cowardly form of murder with which in later times they have been so often charged. Disorders had been generated in the city by the weak and venal reign of Innocent VIII.; and in the course of his last illness, two hundred and twenty persons were assassinated in the streets.

During these centuries the church stood in substance untouched and unchanged; but there arose important modifications in the temper with which all classes of the community regarded both her institutions and her creed.

Among the mass of the people, the undoubting devotion of the dark ages, although not extinct, now burned with an unsteady flame. On the other hand, from the epoch of the revival of literature, the educated laymen had been generally infected with a spirit of scepticism, or at least of indifference, which, if it was unlikely to generate much positive sectarianism, had an obvious tendency to produce (as it is indeed said to have really produced in many instances) a system of belief hovering between classical idolatry and pure deism. Among the wiser and better of the clergy themselves, who saw their order deeply tainted by the prevailing depravity, there was a

frequent manifestation of a wish for reform in discipline. Efforts of this kind, made by pious ecclesiastics, were often more zealous than discreet; and the new miracles and ceremonies which some heads of the church introduced, were still less fitted to remedy the crying evils.

Places of pilgrimage were proclaimed all over the peninsula as well as in Sicily. The Holy House of the Virgin, said to have marvellously descended on the Hill of Loretto in 1295, became the chief point of attraction; but its fame was rivalled by the jubilees or penitential pilgrimages to Rome, instituted in 1300 by the cunning Boniface VIII., and designed to take place at intervals of fifty years. The reforms among the monastic communities were measures dictated by a better spirit. The Franciscans suffered several changes of this kind, and the most important steps which affected that order within the Alps were, the formation of the Observantines in 1368, and that of the Minims in 1473. Fits of remorse occasionally spread like epidemics. The Flagellants had inundated Italy in 1260; and in 1399 crowds of penitents, clothed in white linen garments, passed during three months from town to town with covered faces, bearing a crucifix, and singing the melancholy hymn of the Virgin at Calvary, then newly composed.*

Among several ecclesiastics, who came forward to preach reform both in morals and in the discipline of the church, as Giovanni of Vicenza and others had done before, the most famous was the Ferrarese Dominican Girolamo Savonarola, who, in 1489, founded at Florence a penitential society, called the Piagnoni, half-religious half-political. At first favoured by the court of Rome, he was afterwards persecuted by it, and he and the Franciscans were on the point of referring the truth of his doctrines and prophecies to the ordeal of fire; but one or both of the parties lost courage. Savonarola was besieged by the inconstant mob in S. Mark, the Florentine

* Stabat mater dolorosa,
Juxta crucem lacrymosa,
Dum pendebat filius.

convent of his order; and was burned alive in conformity to a sentence of the pope, prompted by the ruling faction in the city. Other heretics were also sacrificed in various parts of Italy towards the end of the same century; and no dissenters from the church escaped altogether the vigilance of the bishops and their inquisitorial assistants, the Dominicans. Those who were least molested seem to have been the peaceable Waldenses or Vaudois, a confessedly moral people, whose colonies, in the highland valleys of western Piedmont, are alleged by their historians to have subsisted for ages before the early part of the thirteenth century, which, however, is the time when they begin to attract general notice. This sect, now extending itself, had secret congregations at Genoa, Florence, and the retired town of Aquila, in the Abruzzo; besides an avowed settlement in Calabria Citra, which the feudal lords of the district, pleased with their industry, were long able to protect from the jealousy of the church. In 1488, a crusade against the Vaudois, blessed both by Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII., was proclaimed in the northern provinces; and great suffering took place before the Duke of Savoy could be persuaded to interfere for the rescue of his subjects. The suspension of persecution was only temporary, and their condition became worse and worse.

The enthusiasm of the White Penitents, and the calm retirement of the Waldenses, bore equally little resemblance either to the commercial activity of Florence and the three maritime republics, or to the pomp which, from the beginning of the fourteenth century, prevailed at the courts of the Neapolitan kings, and of the lords in Lombardy and Romagna. It was common to proclaim all over Italy the holding of a court of pastime, at which, besides the neighbouring princes and nobles, there appeared minstrels, musicians, actors, singers, rope-dancers, and buffoons. The most celebrated of such festivals were those held at Mantua in 1340, on the marriages of some members of the Gonzaga family, and at Milan in 1368, when Galeazzo Visconti gave his

daughter Violante to Edward III.'s son, Lionel duke of Clarence.

With the Lombard and Romagnol princedoms, there arose a new system of warfare, which was the curse of the whole country till the end of the fifteenth century. Cavalry were now considered as the main strength of armies, and wars, formerly mere forays, were lengthened into campaigns. Both causes tempted the employment of mercenary troops; and every province was inundated by hireling bands called Companies of Adventure, led by captains (Condottieri) who themselves were equally venal, and passed without ceremony or shame from the service of one master to that of the next who paid them better. The first of these hordes was formed in 1343, chiefly of Germans, by one of that nation named Werner, who, with most of his followers, had served the Pisans in their wars against Florence. For some years his soldiery, when no prince or state employed them, roamed over the whole peninsula, and plundered with impunity. A still more terrible host, called the Great Company, was raised nearly in the same way ten years after, by a French knight of S. John, who is called Fra Monreale, and was beheaded by Rienzi. Soon after his death, this company, then under the captainship of Lando, a German, numbered 5000 mounted men-at-arms, with the usual complement of foot-soldiers, making in all a body of not less than 20,000. The contemporary White Company, composed of French and English, trained in the wars of Edward III., and including many of our island-archers, was commanded during thirty years, spent in the service of the popes, the Milanese, or the Florentines, or as an independent troop of robbers, by Sir John Hawkwood, one of the greatest leaders in the middle ages.* The oldest

* Hallam, vol. i. p. 499. The whole history of Hawkwood has in it so much of the serio-comic, that it may be allowable to mention even the trouble the Italians had in pronouncing his name, which did not settle down into its Italianized form of Acuto or Aguto till it had undergone many metamorphoses, of which his Italian biographer enumerates thirteen, including such versions as

native company, called that of Saint George, was gathered in 1379 by Alberic count of Barbiano, a Bolognese noble; and under him for many years all the great soldiers of the country learned the art of war. We shall immediately see his pupils founding petty kingdoms.

In the midst of scenes like these, Italian literature put forth its greenest shoots; Italian liberty in Florence gained, and then lost, its fiercest battles; and Italian sternness in Venice concentrated itself into an essence, which, though a poison, was also an antiseptic.

POLITICAL HISTORY.

THE STATES OF THE CHURCH.

During the seventy-two years of the papal residence at Avignon (bestowed on the church by Philip III. in 1273), the city of Rome was a hell upon earth. In escaping from personal discomfort and disrespect, the popes gained indeed one of their ends; but they had nearly paid for their ease by the loss of their sovereignty. Their legate was a cipher among the Romans: the great nobility, the Orsini, Colonna, and others, fighting daily

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"Haucobbeda" and "Kaukkaduc."—See Manni's "Vita di Giovanni Aguto," in the second volume of the Florentine Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, 1770. The Italian historians will have it that their hero was of noble birth, the son of one Anizo an Englishman, and descended from a king, whom they are pleased to name Mempreccio.—The homely truth is told in Stow's Chronicle (Richard II. pp. 308, 309; Ed. 1615). The Italian bandit-soldier was the son of Gilbert Hawkwood, a tanner at Hedingham in Essex, was bound apprentice to a tailor in London, and was impressed for Edward III.'s wars in France, where he served in the ranks as a bowman, and rose to command before the troops were disbanded, after which he and others shifted for themselves. He married Donnina, a natural daughter of Bernabo Visconti. In the cathedral of Florence, where he lies buried, there may be seen, very near Orcagna's likeness of Dante, an equestrian portrait of him painted by Paolo Uccello. His executors in England erected a cenotaph to his memory in the church of his native parish, and founded, there and in the chapel of Hedingham castle, two chantries for masses in behalf of his soul.

in the streets, agreed only in their licentious oppression of the lower orders. Despair more than once armed the miserable commoners; but the ancient spirit was dead within them, and their ranks fell like rushes before the lances of the patrician knights.

The middle of this period, however, produced one extraordinary revolution. The revival of classical studies elevated the few scholars of Italy into an excitement bordering on fanaticism, which extended itself to religion and politics. They dreamed of ancient universal empire, which, in their dream, was wedded to ancient republican freedom; and the most eager of the studious enthusiasts, Nicolà Rienzi, a Roman of low birth but of some learning united with unsurpassed eloquence and energy, resolved that the vision should become reality. His talents, besides introducing him to the friendship of Petrarch and other literary men, procured him an official place under the government. He formed a party, and on the 20th of May 1347 rose at the head of the whole populace of Rome; after which, assuming the title of Tribune, he wielded for a time all the power of the state. The nature of his proposed reforms is indistinctly known; but they probably amounted to no more than an establishment of the old constitutional privileges under the papal sovereignty, together with a severe depression of the privileged order, by whose insolent cruelty (the murder of a kinsman or brother) Rienzi is said to have been first aroused. He vanquished the nobles at a blow; and the popes, who had no cause to love them, not only acquiesced in his strong measures, but confirmed him in his self-created office. The stories which have been preserved of the happiness enjoyed by the city under his brief rule, though fabulous and incredible, are a remarkable testimony to the force of his character; while the anomalous pomp of his court evinced at once the ignorance which alloyed his confused learning, and the romantic extravagance which pervaded all his ideas. The Tribune was intoxicated by his sudden elevation, as well as by the deference which his new state strangely enough

received from all the princes of Italy ; he showed himself vain and imprudent, and the worthless mob, for whose regeneration he had laboured, grew tired of a freedom which disappointed their hopes both of wealth and license. The papal court suspected his designs ; the barons, whom he had punished and bitterly degraded, gathered their vassals and broke out into insurrection ; the Roman plebeians refused to strike a blow for liberty ; and on the 15th of December, before his administration had lasted seven months, Rienzi fled from the Capitol in disguise. After he had been imprisoned some years at Avignon, the anarchy of Rome under the triumphant nobles induced Innocent in 1354 to send him back as a governor with the title of Senator : but the people refused to worship their fallen idol ; and, after having ruled a few months, he was slain in a sedition. His whole history is strange and perplexing, and yet, after we make every allowance for his eccentricity and unsteadiness, we cannot but feel a warm admiration for his character, joined with a hearty contempt for the cowardly race whom he died to liberate.

The restoration of the Holy See to Italy in 1377 was immediately followed by the thirty-nine years' Schism of the West, during which two lines of rival popes, one at Rome and the other at Avignon, simultaneously claimed the obedience of the ecclesiastical state and the Christian church. The undisputed series of pontiffs, commencing with the election of Martin V. by the Council of Constance, speedily strengthened the papal prerogatives against the Roman citizens. Republican institutions or their names can still be obscurely traced ; but the last attempt for liberty, the conspiracy of the brave and intelligent patrician Stefano Porcari, was suppressed in 1453 by Nicholas V., and its leader executed. Thenceforth, the popes nominated at will all the officers of the state ; and in that century they began, likewise, the ruinous system, continued at this day, of conferring all important offices on ecclesiastics.

The secession of the Roman bishops had endangered

their sovereignty in the provinces, as much as in their episcopal city. Indeed, along the eastern side of the Apennine, the ancient franchises of the towns had not been in so many cases surrendered directly to the papal see, as subverted by powerful citizens, who emulated on a small scale the absolutism and pomp of the Lombard princes. The Lords of Romagna, during the fourteenth century, either enjoyed uninterrupted independence, or carried on fierce wars against the papal Legates; and several districts in the March of Ancona were equally rebellious. The second great insurrection of that age, which broke out in 1375, communicated itself to the western provinces: eighty towns and castles revolted in ten days; and at the end of the year the church retained nothing but Rimini and its district, preserved for it by the Malatesta, who, after the Polenta of Ravenna, were the most powerful of the Romagnol lords. The return of the popes, however, speedily strengthened their interest: their dominions nearest to the metropolis readily submitted: all the petty princes who still exercised a precarious rule in the eastern provinces, gradually acknowledged the supremacy of the Holy See; and its kingly prerogatives rapidly assumed force and consistence.

The subjugation of Bologna, after Pepoli's gift of it, was a work of several generations; and even in the fifteenth century its lords, the Bentivoglio, wanted little that an independent sovereign should have. In 1370, Perugia and its territory were surrendered to the popes, who had now reached their utmost limit in Tuscany; but here, likewise, their authority was slowly established, and for nearly a hundred years was hardly more than nominal.

NAPLES AND SICILY.

The history of these states presents, amidst many interesting incidents, little that possessed a permanent importance. During the fourteenth century, Naples

and Sicily continued to form separate kingdoms, and the revolutions of the latter in that period may be allowed to pass with a simple enumeration of sovereigns.

In Naples, the age was opened by Robert the Wise, whose long reign, active and ambitious without being properly warlike, was renowned for its patronage of art and learning. He was succeeded by his young daughter, the beautiful and unfortunate Joanna I., whose suspected character, the murder of her husband the prince of Hungary, the subsequent course of her life, and, finally, her violent death, make her eventful history very like that of Mary of Scotland.* In 1435, on the death of the licentious Joanna II., the Neapolitan line of Anjou was extinct; and Alfonso the Magnanimous, king of Aragon and Sicily, seizing the continental provinces, founded there the Aragonese dynasty. He bestowed both these territories and the island on his illegitimate son Ferdinand, who, after lengthened wars with the collateral branches of the dispossessed house, established himself in the joint kingdom (thenceforth called that of the Two Sicilies), and transmitted it to his descendants.

The new line of princes preserved the privileges of both parliaments, the Neapolitan and the Sicilian; but Alfonso sowed the seeds of decay in both, by purchasing at their meetings large donatives from the people, and making, as the counterpart, liberal grants of seignorial privileges to the barons. The feudal lords, indeed, as particularly appears from the list of the famous parliament held in 1442, were usually the sole members of the Neapolitan diet, to the exclusion both of the municipal deputies and of the prelates. The roll of that session contained the king, the officers of state, and an hundred barons or their proxies.†

* Most historians consider Joanna guilty both of dissolute conduct and of the murder. Sismondi is quite decided. But Hallam, a very dispassionate judge, acquits her of the first charge, and has strong doubts as to the second.

† Summonte, tom. iii. pp. 15, 16. Giannone, lib. xxvi. cap. 1.

THE PRINCIPALITIES OF LOMBARDY.

We have seen Milan fall, towards the end of the thirteenth century, under the papal partisans the Visconti. This family soon acquired the sovereignty of the other leading towns throughout central Lombardy; and in 1387, Gian-Galeazzo Visconti, the most enterprising prince of a vicious race, wrenched Padua from the brave Carrara, and the Veronese March from the Scala, another of the better class among those usurping houses. Gian-Galeazzo, the bugbear of all Italy, was now lord of a principality which embraced sixteen cities, and covered nearly the whole northern quarter of the peninsula. Its territory suffered losses during the next century; but in 1395, the Emperor Wenceslaus had erected the whole as it then stood under the Visconti into a duchy of Milan, and its lords thenceforth ranked among the sovereign princes of Europe. They were soon to be represented by the son of a poor woodcutter. Braccio di Montone a Perugian noble, and Sforza Attendolo orginally a peasant of Romagna, were the most celebrated pupils of Barbiano the condottiere; and, during the first quarter of the fifteenth century, were pitched against each other in all the wars of Italy. Braccio formed an ephemeral princedom around Perugia: Sforza, though he gained no such prize, bequeathed to his son Francesco his genius and reputation. Francesco, marrying a natural daughter of Filippo Maria, the last of the Visconti, seized the Milanese duchy, and in 1450 was proclaimed Duke, asserting a weak title compounded of inheritance and election, with a stronger one founded simply on conquest. The lust and cruelty of his heir, Galeazzo, were revenged by his assassination in 1476; but the family recovered the throne, and the treacherous Lodovico, called the Moor, was Duke at the close of the century.

Francesco Sforza was a most judicious ruler. Finding a wise and moderate series of statutes for taxation and manufactures, established by the republicans, and

preserved by the Visconti, he altered these in no respect unless to follow out their true spirit. He kept up that freedom from corporate exclusions in trade, for which Milan, in contradistinction to Florence, had been so remarkable; he maintained the tribunal of commerce, which judged in mercantile disputes summarily and without appeal; he continued to cherish that principle of Milanese society, which refused to hold trade as a stain on nobility or disqualification for office; and he left unchanged those old laws which exempted artificers from municipal taxes. He discovered that bounties recently offered had brought a few Florentine silk-weavers northward; and he encouraged these so judiciously, that, in 1480, they amounted to eighty, a large number for the period. He continued to publish annually the moderate tariff of duties on the transmission of goods, which had been framed on views that may be sufficiently illustrated by one instance. There had been passed in 1409 a statute, the first of the kind, imposing an export-duty on home-made cloths: the Duke Gian-Maria, becoming ashamed of its illiberal spirit, annulled it eighteen days after its enactment. Francesco's successors, although unworthy of him, did not do much harm; and the two races of Milanese princes gave over their dominions to Charles V., in a state of prosperity which was not quite destroyed even by a century and a half of Spanish misrule.*

The only petty princes of Italy, besides the Sforza, who can be said to have enjoyed real independence in the latter part of the fifteenth century, were the following: —the Este, who had now an acknowledged title of sovereignty, having been created dukes of Modena and Reggio by the emperor in 1452, and of Ferrara by the pope in 1471;—the Gonzaga, who, masters of Mantua since 1328, were made marquises of its territory by an imperial charter in 1433;—and, in Piedmont, the two ancient houses of Montferrat and Savoy. The sinking marquisate

* Verri, Memorie Storiche sulla Economia Pubblica dello Stato di Milano, § 1, 2; p. 17-48; Opere, (Ed. Milano, 1818).

of Montferrat had been held since 1306 by cadets of the imperial family of the Palæologi, descendants of the old marquises in the female line. The counts of Savoy, created dukes in 1417, already possessed extensive territories in Piedmont, and had reduced almost to complete subjection the marquisate of Saluzzo.

THE MARITIME REPUBLICS.

Pisa.

The constitution of this city, always highly aristocratic, presents no remarkable peculiarities. Its political importance disappears early, and its history in the last section of the middle ages requires little detail. In 1284, its protracted struggle with its rivals, the Genoese, had been closed by the sea-fight near the islet of Meloria, at the mouth of the Arno, which completely annihilated its maritime power. Three years after this blow, the usurpation and treachery of the Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, the Pisan captain of the people, were fearfully punished, by the starvation of him and his sons in the celebrated Tower of Famine. In less than half a century, the republic lost Sardinia to the crown of Aragon, and its politics were now confined to the defence of the declining cause of Ghibellinism in Tuscany. It was repeatedly subdued by the dukes of Milan and other usurpers; and in 1406, the Florentines, purchasing the sovereignty of it from the Visconti, mastered it after a brave resistance, and reduced it to a permanent subjection, which ruined it for ever.

Genoa.

This commercial city had been jealously checked by Venice before the decline of Pisa; and hostilities had commenced in 1258. A second contest, conducted on both sides with great vigour and bravery, originated in 1293; and the greatest of the struggles, usually called the war of Chioggia, began in 1378. The Genoese fleet, under Pietro Doria, drove their rivals from the sea, and block-

aded the lagoons of Venice, storming the islet and town of Chioggia. The Venetian admiral, Vittore Pisani, who had been imprisoned by his countrymen on a former defeat, was recalled to the command by their repenting despair; his magnanimity accepted the atonement, and his skill and bravery saved his country. He besieged the enemy, forced them to surrender, and thus struck the first of those blows which ruined their state.

In the thirteenth century, the Genoese Podestà had been assisted by a council of eight, elected by as many companies or guilds, formed exclusively of nobles, yet not embracing all the nobility; but this oligarchical senate was opposed by frequent and spirited parliaments of the whole people. Continual revolutions occurred, in which the noble families of the Grimaldi and Fieschi stood as Guelfs, the Doria and Spinola as Ghibellines; and, in 1339, the chances of a popular tumult raised the virtuous Simone Boccanegra to the head of the republic for life, under the title of Doge or Duke, borrowed from Venice. This mode of elective government was next made permanent, the nobles however being excluded from the dogeship and other offices; a plebeian oligarchy usually maintained itself against a series of attempted revolutions; and before 1400 the republic, threatened by Gian-Galeazzo, surrendered itself to the King of France as its over-lord, stipulating for freedom, but admitting a French garrison. Some feeble attempts at liberation occupied the succeeding century; and in 1488, the Duke of Milan was formally recognised as sovereign, the doge being only his lieutenant.*

Venice.

In the fifteenth century the picturesque island-city presented to a stranger the most gorgeous of spectacles, especially during the long carnival, or in any other of its

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* Hallam, vol. i. p. 464-470. Sismondi, tome iii. p. 319-328; tome v. p. 291-294; tome vii. p. 366-374. Raumer, vol. v. p. 174-180.

numerous local festivals. Such was the anniversary of the Abduction of the Brides, or that still more splendid solemnity in which, annually on Ascension Day, the doge, surrounded by the gondolas of the whole population, sailed out in the great galley called the Bucentaur, and wedded the Adriatic by throwing his ring into its waters. All the magnificence of the age was there exhibited to the grave Venetians, who, wearing masks and dressed in black, seemed one united nation, equal in rights, and proud of their privileges. If the traveller questioned the merchants in the little square of the Rialto, he heard well-founded boasts of prosperity, and grateful praises of rulers who protected commerce by good laws incorruptibly administered. If he conversed with the gondoliers, the sailors, or the glass-workers, he was told that the government not only amused the poor by public exhibitions, but maintained them in comfort by employment and charity; and that it displayed equal kindness in allowing the two local factions of the populace, the Niccoloti with their black caps and sashes on one side of the Grand Canal, and the Castellani with their red ones on the other, to fight out their feuds to bloodshed on the bridge of San Barnaba under the superintendence of the police. If he addressed a patrician, standing untitled among counts and marquises of Dalmatia or Istria, whose honours he had helped to confer, the haughty noble led him to the palace of S. Mark, where the doge, the nominal head of the state, received royal ambassadors without rising or lifting his peaked cap. But, if the stranger could have looked behind the masks which covered the faces of the patricians, he would have seen those fearful glances which proved that every man suspected his neighbour of being a spy; at the corner of each of the principal squares he might have remarked vases of bronze, in the shape of Lions' Mouths, open day and night to receive denunciations; if he could have penetrated into the dungeons of the ducal palace (its "Pozzi" beneath the level of the canals, or its "Piombi," which lay in suffocating heat close to the leaden roofs),

he would have witnessed secret tortures, imprisonments for life, and executions by poison or strangling without trial; in the houses of the nobles he might, day after day, have missed some accustomed face, and in the Canal Orfano, at dead of night, he might have heard a heavy plunge which accounted for the lost friend. The chronicles of Venice would have taught the foreigner yet another lesson. They would have proved that the republic thus anomalously ruled had resisted for ages, and would resist for ages more, the attacks which were destroying, one after another, all the small states of Europe,—that it was equally strong against the turbulent nobility and the grasping clergy, and was to be strong for many generations against the new monarchies beyond the Alps.

The constitutional history of Venice must be retraced for a little.* From the year 697 the Venetian league was governed by a doge, whose power, truly monarchical, was only stopped in 1032 from becoming hereditary. But in 1172 a new constitution was formed, under which the appointments of the doge and other magistrates, as well as the supreme legislative power, were vested in the Grand Council of 480 citizens, eighty from each of the six municipal wards. These members were annually elected by twelve tribunes, two from each ward, at first chosen by all the franchised inhabitants, but afterwards by the council itself. This representative body began immediately both to limit the doge's power, and to throw its own into the hands of delegated committees. In 1179, besides creating the criminal Quarantia, or Board of Forty, which had extensive administrative powers, it intrusted a portion of the executive to a Senate (the Pregadi, or Invited), which, originally consisting of 60 members and afterwards of 120, all elected annually by the grand council, was at last increased to about 300 by the admis-

* Daru, Histoire de Vénise, 8 tomes, 1821. Sismondi, passim. Hallam, vol. i. p. 470-490. Raumer, vol. v. p. 224-249. Edinburgh Review, vol. xlvi. p. 75-106.

sion of nearly 200 official persons. At the same time, for the immediate and ordinary business of the state, there was instituted the Signoria, or Council of the Doge, a board which, besides six members elected by the great council every eight months, contained the doge himself and the three presidents of the Quarantia. In certain of its functions the Signoria formed itself into the "Collegio" by admitting the sixteen Savii or Sages, a body chosen by the senate every six months. If this naked outline seems intricate, a picture filled up with all the details,—such as the functions of the Avvogadori, and the complicated modes of voting,—would be still more so. All the features of the constitution aided it in its progress towards an oligarchy, and it reached that consummation very early in the fourteenth century.

In 1297 and the following year, the hereditary aristocracy was sealed by certain laws, which constitute what the Venetians called the Locking-up of the Grand Council.* The tribuneship was abolished, and the censors were ordered to expunge from the rolls of the council all but those whose ancestors on the father's side had already sat in it. In 1319, it was enacted that every descendant of a member should be entered on the roll, upon attaining the age of twenty-five. Some immaterial changes followed; but the council was now strictly hereditary, and quite unlimited in number.

This sovereign aristocracy of blood, however, was immediately enslaved by a shifting oligarchy within itself. In 1310, the pope, disputing with the Venetians about Ferrara, laid their city under interdict, and proclaimed a crusade against them. In the same year, the jealousies of two powerful families found vent in the conspiracy of Boemondo Tiepolo against the doge Gradenigo. The senate, terrified by these manifold perils, armed a temporary board, the Council of Ten, with powers inquisitorial, irresponsible, and almost unbounded. The public

* La Serrata del Maggior Consiglio; or, in the Venetian dialect, La Serrada del Mazor Consegio.

danger lasted; the formidable board did so likewise; and in 1325 it was invested permanently with a general commission to watch over the security of the state. Its ten members were elected annually by the grand council. Venice already lay under that reign of terror, which was to reach its climax in the succeeding century.

The doge, without his council, durst not open an official letter, nor do any official act; he was surrounded by spies, and ruled by precedents in every action of his life, down to the expense of his meals; he could not leave the city without permission, and was refused even the power of resigning his office.

During many ages, the political storms which swept over all Italy never crossed the lagoons that separated Venice from the mainland. Her rulers, throughout their early history, shunned all connexion with the politics of their nearest neighbours. Abroad they acquired territories, which they granted in fief to patricians;—Dalmatia and Istria as early as 997, and in 1204, during the fourth crusade, the Morea, the Ionian Isles, and (by exchange with the Marquis of Montferrat) the island of Candia. But on the adjoining continent they refused to plant their lion-standard of Saint Mark, till, tempted by the dangerous rise of the Scala at Verona, they permanently gained, in 1389, the district of Treviso, their first Italian conquest. In the beginning of the next century, they took advantage of the unsettled state of Lombardy after the death of Gian-Galeazzo, and reduced the principalities of Padua, Verona, and Vicenza. Soon after this they acquired from the Visconti, through the services of their brave and ill-requited general Carmagnola, the districts of Brescia and Bergamo; and in 1424, they had the river Adda as their frontier to the west, which they never afterwards passed.

About this time, their possessions on the mainland skirted the Adriatic uninterruptedly from the mouths of the Po to the southern shores of Albania, and comprehended (without reckoning the Greek territories) a sur-

face of 2000 square leagues, peopled by nearly two millions of inhabitants. The population of the city of Venice, already 90,000, was still on the increase. Among the nobles there were a thousand who possessed incomes ranging between 4000 ducats (£680) and 70,000 (£12,000), at a time when the value of money was perhaps three times as much as at present. The free revenue which the state, after deducting the expenses of collection, derived from the capital and the provinces of Friuli, Treviso, Vicenza, and Verona, was 742,690 ducats, of which the city furnished 598,720. The total free income was made up to 996,290 ducats (£168,000), by extra sources, among which we find the taxes on commerce to have amounted to only 16,000 ducats, collected at an expense of 6000.* The entire expenses of collecting the revenue were 193,310 ducats; and the doge's salary, then and always afterwards, was 12,000. It was calculated that the sales made by the native merchants then amounted annually to 10,000,000 ducats (£1,683,000), bringing a free profit of one-fifth to the trader and another fifth as his charges expended within the state. The annual exports to Lombardy alone were rated at 2,789,000 ducats, for silk, cotton, woollen, and linen wares, soap, sugar, spiceries, dye-woods, and *slaves;* the last article being estimated at 50,000. The wars with the Turks afforded the pretext for this execrable traffic; but there were other slaves besides Mohammedans in the service of the rich Venetians, down to the end of the fifteenth century, if not later. The commerce of the republic was at its zenith in the early part of that age, and its decay became rapid in the next. Besides its celebrity as a mart, Venice from the twelfth century was famed as a great seat of manufactures; and in the fifteenth, the city and its provinces in Italy furnished most

* Daru, tome ii. p 278-286; State of the Republic 1413-1420: and Sanuto there referred to. The fixed revenue of the English crown under Henry V. (who died in 1422) was £55,714, and the supplies voted during his reign of nine years amounted to £203,000; but the king was obliged to contract debt. See Hume's History.

of the commodities then produced in Europe, though its distant colonies, neglected and ill-used, added nothing to the list. The capital had silk-works of all kinds, which had flourished from 1310, when they were introduced by Tuscan refugees; while to these it added soap-works, refineries, chemical-works, lace-works, and (in the isle of Murano since 1177) the renowned manufactures of glass and mirrors, which enjoyed a monopoly. Verona, Vicenza, and Padua, were filled with silk-mills and manufactories of stuffs both in silk and woollen. The province of Bergamo furnished organzine, paper, light woollen cloths, and, with the forges of Brescia, much iron-work, including armour, which was celebrated. The latter town also exported organzine, linen, and lace. Salò was famous for its linen webs and thread; Bassano and Friuli for their silk and woollen goods.* The letter of the law always forbade commerce to the nobles, but the usage of the state always allowed them to practise it. Many of them were the richest among the Venetian merchants.

The Council of Ten had in the mean time been maturing its terrible powers; and, before the middle of the fifteenth century, it had repeatedly exercised the most important functions of sovereignty, making treaties on its own responsibility, and appropriating the finances. In 1355, it condemned to death, with the concurrence of a junta of twenty patricians, a doge accused of plotting against the commonwealth, or rather against the nobles. This was Marino Falier, whose story is known to every one. The fate of the two Foscari, a hundred years later, was equally celebrated, and exhibited not less strikingly the suspicious temper of the aristocratic leaders, as well as the facility with which personal revenge might make state-policy its minister. The conduct of the younger Foscari also illustrates with great force that fanatical patriotism which, amidst all its terrors, the

* Daru, tome iii. p. 56-213, livre xix.

Venetian constitution was able universally to inspire. Between the age of Falier and that of the Foscari, two foreigners had successively died, victims to the ambition of the state and to its faithlessness towards dangerous friends or conquered enemies. Francesco da Carrara, lord of Padua, had been defeated in bravely defending his little kingdom, first against the Visconti, and then against the queen of the Adriatic. After a series of romantic adventures, which are described in an interesting old chronicle, he surrendered in 1405 on the faith of a capitulation. He and his sons were privately strangled in prison. Francesco Carmagnola, one of the ablest of the condottieri, served Venice gloriously against the dukes of Milan; but he at last met with reverses, and, watched, like all servants of the state, by commissaries constantly present in his camp, was suspected, though never convicted, of treachery. In 1432, he came to the city, and waited on the senate his masters, who had condemned him to die by a vote passed eight months before, but kept inviolably secret. They feasted and caressed him till the executioners were ready to seize his person. He was tortured by the Ten, brought out in the evening with a gag in his mouth, and beheaded between the two columns which still stand in the Piazzetta of S. Mark.*

In the case of the Foscari, we find the tribunal of the

* *Doge.* Drag him before the Ten!
Carmagnola. Hear me an instant first!—Ye have resolved,
I see, upon my death: ye have resolved
Thereby your own eternal infamy!
The Lion standard now, passing its bounds,
Floats upon distant towers, where Europe knows
That I have planted it. Here, it is true,
Men will be silent; but around your frontier,
Where the dark terror of your empire ends,
Shall be inscribed, in letters ne'er effaced,
My service and its thanks. Look to your annals!
Look to the future! There will come a day
When ye shall call for captains:—Who will answer?
Il Conte di Carmagnola, Tragedia di Alessandro Manzoni (1820), atto v. scena 1.

Ten exercising its powers, perhaps for the first time, along with the Doge and his Six Councillors, who in 1468 became permanent members of the board, superseding the occasional Juntas previously appointed. But the Ten had already taken a step which made them all-powerful. They were too numerous, and their names were known. In 1454, they, by their own authority, established a board of Three Inquisitors of State, which was to be free not only from these defects but from every other inconvenient restriction.* Its members were appointed by the Ten, and, except the electors, no man knew who they were. Their orders were unsubscribed and issued in the names of the Ten, and their most private records were written by themselves without the aid of a secretary. Two of them (the black inquisitors) were elected from among the original members of the Council of Ten; the third (the red) might be one of the six councillors of the doge. They held the inquisitorial office so long only as they occupied their places in either of those two councils. The Three received the power of adjudging and inflicting capital punishment, under two limitations only; namely, that the sentence was to be unanimous, and its execution secret.† Their jurisdiction of life and death extended over the Ten, the Doge, and the Inquisitors themselves, the doge being admitted in this last case to make up the necessary number of votes.‡

* Till lately, neither the constitution of this secret board, nor the date of its establishment, was exactly known. Daru has discovered the act of its institution, and its extraordinary statutes, which he has published at full length: Tome iii. livre 16; tome vi. livre 39. sect. 16, and p. 385-523. But the genuineness of the statutes (which our own best critics, of all political parties, consider to have been fully proved) is still denied in Venice, and has been controverted in a work published by a Tiepolo in 1828.

† "When it shall happen that our tribunal must inflict death on any one, let no public show take place; but let the sentence be secretly executed by sending him to be drowned in the Canal Orfano."—Statuti, art. 16. The stiletto, however, was permitted; and in executing persons high in office, the inquisitors are advised to proceed "by poison, rather than by any other means, if it shall be possible."—Statuti, art. 37.

‡ Statuti, art. 1, 5, 37, 38.

Espionage (we want an English word, because we want the thing) was reduced at once to a regular system, whose completeness shows that it must have been long practised before the statutes put its rules into writing. It extended over all places and persons, in the provinces as well as the city,—the churches and the haunts of debauchery,—the porticos of S. Mark, under which the nobles alone had the privilege of walking,—the palaces of foreign ambassadors,—the public streets, whenever a knot of people gathered together.* Envoys residing in Venice were objects of peculiar suspicion: members of the privileged order durst not hold communication with them on pain of death; and, by a nicely-fitted series of rules, they were placed in a state of complete insulation.† Provision was also made for misleading the foreign powers themselves; and, in order effectually to disseminate a false report, the plan recommended was, to communicate it to the pope's nuncio as a profound secret.‡ But the cruelty and perfidy of the board were less surprising than the boldness with which, in their very earliest body of statutes, they assumed the right of violating the constitution at will. They ordered the officials in a province, or the ambassadors of the state residing abroad, to communicate directly with the inquisitors instead of addressing the signoria or college, which was the administration; they kept back from the government what information they pleased, and even instructed the ambassador or provincial officer how much of the truth he was to communicate.§

The records of this terrible court are not matters of history: but a few judgments have been preserved, which, whether they belong to the Ten or the Three, emanated from the same spirit,—a spirit of relentless suspicion incessantly directed towards the nobles, but perhaps in no instance descending so low as to touch a plebeian. In

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* Statuti, art. 7, 9, 10, 20, 40. Aggiunta novissima, art. 31.

† Statuti, art. 7, 12, 28. Aggiunta, art. 8. Aggiunta novissima, art. 6, 7, 12, 17.

‡ Aggiunta novissima, art. 3, 13.

§ Statuti, art. 13. Aggiunta novissima, art. 1, 4, 32.

1471, Borromeo Memmo, a patrician, was hanged for verbal treason against the Podestà of Padua; and the three witnesses, who had heard the words on an evening, and not lodged the accusation till the morning after, were punished for the delay with a year's imprisonment followed by two years of exile. Somewhat earlier, while the Venetian Paul II. was pope, his sister, Elisabetta Barbo, wife to one of the noble family of Zeno, was suspected, though not convicted, of having divulged to her brother some secrets of the council, learned through her husband. She was banished to Istria, with a sentence of death if she should return. In the same year, Lorenzo Baffo, who had been banished for corruption in discharging his duty as a judge, did venture to return home, was discovered, and executed.

We now leave Venice for a time, while its patricians are in the power of this secret board, its plebeians moderately governed and wealthy, its trade and manufactures still flourishing, and the royal isle of Cyprus added in 1480 to the two kingdoms, Candia and the Morea, which the proud republic had so long possessed. On the three masts which at this day, in the square of Saint Mark, front the cathedral, the banners of those three monarchies used to float on holidays.

THE INLAND REPUBLICS OF TUSCANY.

The Smaller Cities.

Constitutional liberty, expelled from her Lombard citadels, retreated into Tuscany, where she found a refuge during the greater part of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The danger to freedom here usually arose, not from ambitious individuals, but from other communities, which, themselves free, attempted both to impose tribute on their less powerful neighbours, and to restrict or take away their right of administering their own affairs. In this manner several of the chief towns became for a time the centres of petty states, all of which, before the close of the middle ages, had in their turn

been subjected by Florence, excepting only Perugia which fell under the popes, Siena which was for a time a dependency of the Milanese, and Lucca which was a republic at the end of the period.

Lucca, the ancient seat of the marquisate of Tuscany, long retained a constitution strongly inclining to democracy; but its fame rose highest in those few years (1316—1328), during which it had surrendered its liberty to Castruccio Castracani. This able and unscrupulous soldier, who wanted nothing but longer life to have made him the founder of another sovereignty like the Milanese, had at one time erected his native town into the capital of a principality which, embracing Pistoia and Volterra, stretched as far north and west as Sarzana and Pisa. His death left the city to be preyed upon by a long series of usurping lords, from whom it was not emancipated till 1370; and after that date, assuming a new constitution closely modelled on that of Florence, it sank gradually lower in political insignificance.*

In Siena, during the twelfth century, the Great Council, to which every household sent a member, elected annually a Special Council of 100 nobles and 50 commoners. After the decided rise of the plebeians, the vehemence of the struggle between them and the barons is evinced by the fact, that the Podestà and Captain of the People long stood side by side; but in 1283, the nobles were violently disfranchised, and, during a whole century, beginning at that date, there was an uninterrupted series of contests, in which one club of burgher-oligarchs successively displaced another. The subjection of the little state to the dukes of Milan next prepared it for making, in modern times, a part of the duchy of Tuscany.†

* Raumer, vol. v. p. 181. Sismondi, tome v. p. 75; tome vii. p. 45-51.

† Raumer, vol. v. p. 219. Sismondi, tome vi. p. 239; tome vii. pp. 27, 289; tome viii. p. 46.

Florence.

But all the Tuscan towns yield in interest to the classic city which became their chief.

The subject territory of Florence in its days of freedom never exceeded the size of the smaller English counties; and its people, though they often displayed great moral courage, never bore a high character as soldiers. The peasantry composed a less important class than the artisans of the towns; the feudal baronage of the dark ages was, as we shall discover, speedily disarmed; and the higher ranks of the franchised citizens owed their wealth to commerce and manufactures, out of which they had reared up a kind of nobility, wherein the silk-merchant looked down on the dealer in woollens. The political importance of the state, though wholly indirect, was strong as well as extensive, at a time when she alone rivalled the maritime republics as a mart for her own and foreign productions, and when her bankers, the oldest Christian money-lenders, except the decaying Lombards, relieved the necessities of indigent sovereigns at the farthest extremity of Europe. The Florentines contented themselves with this indirect influence; and the only conquests of theirs that have been charged with imprudence, had really the effect of giving them a seaport, by the want of which their commerce had long been checked in its progress. For, in 1406, as we have seen, they definitively gained Pisa, which stood on their way to the sea; and in 1421, they purchased Leghorn from the Genoese. The period of their greatest opulence began after these acquisitions.

Their manufactures, however, had been active since the beginning of the thirteenth century. The working of woollen cloth was introduced among them in 1239, by a colony of the singular religious order called the Umiliati, who were originally artisans banished from Milan. Though this branch of their trade attained an immense extent, the fabric was made with foreign wool, chiefly from Flanders, and partly from England; and,

accordingly, the art declined when, in the fifteenth century, the transalpine governments began to prohibit or check the exportation of the materials. The silk manufactures of Florence had their raw commodities at hand, and have till this day maintained themselves better than any other productions of Tuscany. The exact time of their introduction is not known, but they can scarcely have come in later than the beginning of the thirteenth century, having travelled from Sicily, where silk was first grown in 1147.* Besides the dealers in silk goods, woollens, and money, the chief traders of the city were the furriers and the apothecaries. The last-named craft soon, in the persons of the Medici, gave sovereigns to Europe.

Before we can take up the constitutional history of Florence in 1300, we must retrace her changes for half a century.† In 1248, the Ghibelline nobles, at the instigation of Frederic II., expelled the anti-imperialists in the mass, and formed an oppressive oligarchy, which, in two years, was put down by a universal insurrection. The glorious epoch of 1254, known as the "Year of Victories," was followed by a sedition of the Ghibellines, which gave the ruling Guelfs a reason or pretence for banishing the heads of the defeated faction. In the war that ensued, the party in possession of the city were attacked by the exiles, assisted by the Sienese and Manfred of Naples; and in 1260, a bloody battle on the banks of the Arbia put Florence into the hands of the Ghibellines and their allies. Nothing but the patriotic firmness of Farinata degli Uberti, the leader of the victors, saved the town from being rased to the ground; and it was the quarters of Manfred's German garrison till 1266, when the citizens rose, drove out the foreigners,

* Pignotti's History of Tuscany, English translation, vol. iii. pp. 250-296.

† Sismondi's work furnishes most of the necessary materials for the theory of the constitution. The view taken in the text, is mainly derived from Hallam (vol. i. pp. 420-451, 535-544), who has systematized this difficult inquiry.

and, with the aid of Charles of Anjou, re-established the Guelf party. In the same year they modelled their polity anew, upon principles which endured as long as the freedom of the state.

The constitution then framed retained both the Podestà and the Capitano del Popolo, who administered criminal justice with concurrent jurisdiction. But the most remarkable part of the revolution lay in two points. First, all persons of Ghibelline ancestry were declared ineligible to public offices; an exclusion which proved permanent. Secondly, the citizens engaged in commerce and manufactures received a regular classification into Arti or Guilds; and the powers of the government, in all essential matters, were thrown into their hands. These corporations were divided into two classes: the Greater, seven in number, embracing some professional men with the higher kinds of traders and artisans;* the Less, originally five,† but gradually increased to fourteen, and comprising the inferior branches. It does not clearly appear how far the organization of the lesser arts was carried at this time; but each of the seven greater received a Council of its own, a Consul to judge in civil matters between members of the guild, and a Banneret or Gonfaloniere, who commanded the craftsmen when they were called out as a militia.

Either then or soon afterwards, the general executive government was transferred from the old consuls to a college of twelve or fourteen persons, called Buonuomini or Anziani, who, however, were displaced in 1282, in favour of an entirely new board of administration. The executive was now committed to six Priori delle Arti, or Priors of the Guilds, elected every two months, of whom one was chosen from each of the greater guilds (except the lawyers), and from each of the six districts of the city. During forty-two years the new priors were elected

* Lawyers (and notaries), dealers in foreign cloth, bankers, woollen-merchants, physicians (and apothecaries), silk-dealers, furriers.

† Cloth-retailers, butchers, smiths, shoemakers, builders.

by a ballot of the old ones, jointly with the office-bearers of the greater arts, and certain assessors.

In 1324, this mode of election was altered, and all respectable citizens were, or should have been, admitted to the government in rotation. The priors and other public functionaries made out separate lists of all the Guelf citizens who were above thirty years of age, and were not considered to lie under any personal disqualification; and the several lists were then purified by a ballot of all the officers who had formed them. The amended roll was revised every two years; and out of it all the public offices were filled by lot. In the same year, the legislative functions were conferred on two Councils, both of which were changed every four months, by the same process as the magistracies. The Council of the Community consisted of 250 members, and was open to nobles as well as commoners: the Council of the People, containing 300, was confined to plebeians. General Parliaments of the whole community were acknowledged to possess the sovereign power; but were summoned only on emergencies, such as great constitutional changes, and the occasional devolution of the Signoria, or lordship over the city, for limited periods on foreign princes or soldiers.

Here then we behold a broad democracy; but, from causes which again require a retrospect, the experiment was not allowed to work fairly. The constitution of 1324, which completed that of 1266, was a victory gained by a body of free and active burghers over a fierce rural nobility and their armed retainers. Since the earlier of these revolutions, some nobles had entered the guilds, in order to qualify themselves for office; more of them stood sullenly aloof, strengthened and disciplined their vassalage, fortified their massive houses in the city, and resolved, like the aristocracy of ancient Rome in the last days of the republic, to live above those laws which they were debarred from administering. Feuds among themselves alternated with murders, robberies, and all sorts of outrages committed by them on the commonalty; the general confusion called for a remedy, and one

was quickly found. Unfortunately the cure invented was not a free communication of rights, but a severer exclusion and depression of the baronage. Giano della Bella, a noble Florentine of democratic inclinations, undertaking to champion the people, executed his task firmly and successfully. His first measure, passed in 1292, was the appointment of a new permanent officer, called the Banneret of Justice (Gonfaloniere di Giustizia), elected every two months from among the office-bearers of the guilds. Under his command was placed a guard of 1000 citizens, afterwards increased to 4000. At the head of this formidable militia, amidst whose ranks floated the banner of the city, bearing its red cross in a white field, the banneret marched out to execute against the nobles those laws, to whose ordinary ministers they refused obedience. This harsh institution was followed by the still harsher "Ordinances of Justice," the first of which specified thirty-seven families as noble or knightly, excluded them and their posterity on that ground from all public offices, and prohibited them from evading the law by enrolling themselves in the guilds. Every noble house was, moreover, made responsible, under heavy penalties, for the good behaviour of all its members; and, with a most unjust and savage severity, common report, attested by two witnesses, was declared sufficient to warrant the gonfaloniere in pronouncing a noble guilty of state crimes, whereupon he and his guard might destroy his fortified mansion or those of his kinsmen and deliver his person to the podestà for punishment. None of these stern enactments were allowed to slumber.*

* The first instance that occurred was a quarrel, in which some nobles attacked the sons of a merchant, and wounded one of them mortally. We are not told that any attempt to punish the murderers by judicial means was considered necessary: "But I, Dino Compagni, being Gonfaloniere of Justice in 1293, went to their houses and the houses of their kinsmen, and caused destroy them, *according to the laws.*" Dino Compagni's "Chronicle of the things that happened in his times," (1280-1312); Muratori, Rer. Ital. Script. tom. ix. p. 475. The annalist however admits, that there

Still the spirit of the ancient feudal lords was not broken. The year 1300 conveyed to Florence, as we have observed, the feuds of the Apennine barons of Pistoia, in which, while the White or Ghibellinish Guelfs, headed by the Florentine family of the Cerchi, numbered in their ranks the illustrious Dante and the chronicler Dino Compagni, the Black Guelfs were headed by a very remarkable man, Corso Donati, in whose portrait even party-hatred cannot deface a rude air of grandeur.* For a few years the city was convulsed by that series of battles, confiscations, banishments, and conspiracies, which chequered the life of the great Italian poet. The old knights, however, were perceptibly weakened; and their remaining strength soon gave way on the formation of another privileged class, which, like the later nobility of ancient Rome, founded its claims to respect on the long possession of office. This plebeian aristocracy speedily became equally insolent and unpopular with the former one, but it was never so lawlessly savage; and fortunately its members were as much divided among themselves as the feudal barons. Nevertheless, popular discontent soon produced the only interval of slavery which, till the rise of the Medici, stained the annals of

were dissensions of the doctors in interpreting the laws. For instance, if the Gonfaloniere was inclined to Ghibellinism, he did not understand that the law called on him to destroy the house of a Ghibelline offender so utterly as that of a Guelf. But the people, he adds, all understood the laws in the same sense, and never would believe that a house was destroyed "according to the laws," so long as one stone of it was left above another.

* "There was a cavalier like unto Catiline the Roman, but more cruel than he; noble of blood, goodly of person, pleasant in speech, adorned with seemly bearing; subtle of invention, with his mind alway set to do mischief; with whom there joined themselves many hired soldiers; and he had a great following, and caused commit many burnings, and many robberies, and much damage on the Cerchi and their friends; much wealth he gained, and rose to high account. This was Messer Corso Donati, who, because of his haughtiness, was named The Baron; insomuch that, when he passed through the streets, many cried, 'Long live the Baron!' and he looked as if the ground were his own on which he trode. Much good service he did, but vainglory guided him."—Dino Compagni, Cronaca, p. 498, B: Anno 1301.

"the fair city." Gualtier de Brienne, titular Duke of Athens, a hireling soldier, happening to visit Italy, was made by the Florentines captain of the people. Intimidating all by foreign troops, while he corrupted the populace by bribes and feasting, he procured in a general parliament a grant of the lordship for life. But the tyrant was foolish as well as cruel and rapacious; and in 1343, before he had ruled ten months, a mutiny of all ranks drove him ignominiously from power.

The number of priors was immediately increased to eight; and it would appear that members of the lesser guilds were thenceforth eligible.* The Signoria or Administration now consisted, properly, of the Banneret of Justice and the Eight Priors; but to these were added, as assessors, the captains of the companies of the Guard of Justice (now sixteen in number), and likewise the twelve Buonuomini, who either were at this time re-established, or had always subsisted under one form or another. The board thus composed, preserved also the initiative in all proceedings of the national councils. In counteraction of the popular influence, the barons were able to procure nothing more than a statute, which erased from the book of nobility certain families, comprehending 530 persons. At the same time, by an oddly characteristic stretch of power, a few commoners who had displeased the ruling party were forcibly ennobled, and thus disfranchised.

But the tide was now about to turn, and the capitalists, combining with the aristocracy of blood, were to form an oligarchy, by which Florence during a quarter of a century was ruled with a high hand, but with a glory never before attained in her history. The device which the combined factions used was ingenious. Since 1266, there had existed a body called the Guelf Corporation, instituted for the support of anti-imperial principles; for which purpose the community had bestowed on it a portion of the confiscated Ghibelline estates, with

* Hallam's opinion; differing from Sismondi's.

a regular constitution and rule of government, by two captains elected from the nobility, two from the commons, and two boards of councillors. The total fall of the imperialists had long made this society quite useless; and the members quietly divided the revenues of their lands. But, immediately after the revolution of 1343, the corporation was made an engine for removing the democratic aspirants to office, by accusing them of Ghibellinism, a charge always vague, now absolutely unmeaning, and yet legally proveable by common report. In 1347, the influence of this Guelf association obtained a law, extending the older statutes of exclusion to all whose ancestors had been known Ghibellines at any time since 1300; and in a few years, after a determined opposition, another measure was carried, subjecting all of that class, who should accept office, to fine, or even to death, at the discretion of the priors. The extreme harshness of this law furnished a pretence for the singular proceeding called Admonition, which was immediately practised with complete success. The corporation "admonished" any obnoxious democrat that he was a suspected person, and would be punished if he took office. The rich plebeian family of the Albizzi had long led the Guelf society; while the Ricci, likewise commoners, stood opposed to them, and were aided by the Strozzi, Scali, and Alberti, as also by the Medici, a trading family that now first emerged from obscurity.

The abuses of the admonition, and the prudent exercise of the power so ill acquired, lasted till 1378, when there broke out the great insurrection of the "Ciompi." This was the name given to the Florentine non-electors, who comprised, besides the day-labourers and mere rabble, an immense number of unincorporated artificers and tradesmen. The most powerful of such crafts were the dyers, weavers, wool-combers, and others dependent on the woollen trade. The Ciompi, besides redress of other grievances, demanded that three new guilds should be formed, two for the unfranchised artisans, and one for the rest of the citizens; and that from these new bodies

two of the eight priors should be chosen. The magistrates seized one of the malecontents, and put him on the rack; the people, rising like a hurricane, stormed the public buildings; and for three days the streets were filled with anarchy and bloodshed. In the third evening, a whim of the tired mob proclaimed Michel Lando, a barefooted wool-comber, to be the Gonfaloniere of Justice; and, by an accident stranger still, Michel was a man of honesty, sense, and courage. He instantly restored order; he preserved it by force of arms against the multitude, who tried to depose him; and he extorted from the oligarchy a concession of all the popular demands.

His successors were not so fortunately chosen; and the aristocracy soon recovered their ground. In 1382, all the changes introduced at the recent revolution, were annulled; and the supremacy of the Guelf plebeian nobles was re-established more firmly than ever. For fifty years longer, this party ruled the state with equal moderation and vigour; no change took place in the constitution, and the foreign policy of Florence was wise and successful: she curbed by turns the Dukes of Milan and the King of Naples, besides conquering Pisa for herself. The leaders of the period were Tommaso degli Albizzi and Niccolò da Uzzano, after whom came a more imprudent chief, Rinaldo, a son of the former.

This young man was unfortunate enough to find himself matched against Cosmo de' Medici, whose wealth and popularity were now at their height. In 1433, resolving to crush his rival, Albizzi failed in getting him executed, though he procured his banishment. Next year, the friends of the Medici obtained from the people the recall of their leader, whereupon Rinaldo and his partisans were exiled in their turn.

Cosmo, now the acknowledged head of the ruling party, was an enlightened and far-seeing man, and, for his times, even virtuous, if virtue can be held consistent with such political schemes as his. The severity of his faction for many years towards their defeated enemies was

according to the rule of the day; but the whole course of his conduct was steadily directed towards breaking in the people for the yoke of hereditary monarchy. In imitation of a dangerous precedent which had been set by the Albizzi in their attack on him, Cosmo established a Balia; that is, a Commission embracing a considerable number of citizens, to which a general parliament temporarily intrusted the whole sovereignty of the republic, expressly specifying among its prerogatives those of banishing citizens, and of nominating to all offices of state. By the assistance of his skilful ally Neri Capponi, with whom the public odium of acting as his tool was shared by the vain and pompous Luca Pitti, he contrived to keep up the balia, with only one stormy interval, till his death, which took place at an advanced age in 1463. The obsequious signoria inscribed on his grave the title of "Father of his Country."

His son Pietro, a man of ordinary intellect, a cripple and invalid, delegated his inherited influence to a committee of five friends, who administered both the republic and the funds of the Medici, for their own advantage as well as for that of Pietro and his house. The quarrels of their leaders, Soderini and Pitti, would not be worth mentioning, were it not that in 1465 they enabled the people for one year, their last, to elect their officers by lot in the constitutional form. Next year a parliament was summoned which, partly bribed, and partly terrified by armed soldiers who surrounded the great square, voted a new balia. The free election of the magistrates was never restored, and from 1466 the commonwealth may be considered as fallen.

Pietro dying in 1469, his sons Lorenzo and Giuliano, both under age, were received by the partisans of the family as the chiefs of the state. The boys, however, devoted to youthful pleasures, willingly left the administration to their father's five friends, who dazzled the eyes of Florence and of all Italy by a lavish magnificence in shows and national works, similar to that by which the early Roman emperors stupified their degenerate

subjects. An insurrection under Bernardo Nardi was unsupported by the people, and its leader being taken was beheaded.

The new princes incurred a greater risk in a more famous conspiracy, which coincided in date with several other plots against Italian despots, and was marked by circumstances eminently characteristic of the country and the age.* When Giuliano the younger of the two had attained majority, his brother and he took away the government from the friends selected by their father. Among these had been Andrea de' Pazzi, who left nine descendants, sons and grandsons, one of which latter had married a daughter of Pietro de' Medici. The Pazzi, who, like their greater kinsmen, were a house of merchants, wealthy and ambitious, bitterly resented the jealousy of the two brothers. The Pope, Sixtus IV., an unscrupulous politician, not disinclined to favour freedom when it did not affect his own power, approved the conspiracy which the discontented family had formed, quieted the scruples of one or two conscientious plotters, gave them Salviati the archbishop of Pisa as a coadjutor, and promised them the papal troops to support the revolution when the Medici should have been assassinated. The attempt was fixed to take place on the 26th of April 1478, in the cathedral, while the brothers should be hearing mass; the elevation of the host was to be the signal for the blow; two laymen undertook to despatch Giuliano, but a third, a captain of mercenaries, who had engaged for Lorenzo, shuddered and drew back when the church was named as the scene of the murder. His part in the tragedy was therefore undertaken by two priests. When the moment arrived, Giuliano, at the first stab, fell dead before the altar; but Lorenzo, missed by his assassins, escaped into the sacristy. The friends of the Medici gathered, and attacked the disconcerted conspirators; the archbishop and the Pazzi were hanged from the windows of the

* Machiavelli, Istorie Fiorentine, lib. viii.

Palazzo Vecchio, and two hundred other Florentines were speedily executed as accomplices in the plot. The pope excommunicated Lorenzo for having slain a churchman, and made war on him, assisted by the king of Naples; but Florence was saved from destruction by the artful temporising of its ruler, and by a descent of the Turks on the Neapolitan coast at Otranto.

Lorenzo lost no time in completing the subjection of his country. He abolished the two national councils, substituting for them a permanent Senate of seventy members, nominated by himself, who appointed all public officers, imposed taxes, administered the finances, and relieved their refined and literary master from the constant drudgery of government. He assumed titles approaching to those of monarchy; he was the "Prince" of Florence, and was addressed with the most submissive deference. His reign was, upon the whole, equitable, liberal, and wise; eminently so, indeed, when it is compared with the tyranny exercised at that time by most of the surrounding despots. His court was the asylum of awakening philosophy, literature, and art; and these pursuits have cast around his usurpation a spell of glory which the scholar would be reluctant to see destroyed. The prudent moderation of his rule, and the interesting vacillation of opinion which then prevailed in Italy, and which, heralding the Reformation, had extended to religion, are instanced in the tolerance long yielded to the eloquent Dominican Savonarola, who preached openly in Tuscany, with the aid of many brethren belonging to his order, a reform in the church, as well as the emancipation of the Italian states. Lorenzo on his death-bed sent for him, confessed himself, and craved absolution. The friar was bold enough to refuse the sacraments to the usurping prince, unless he should restore freedom to his country: the prince had the courage to die a sovereign and unabsolved. He expired in his forty-fourth year, in 1492, at his beautiful country-seat of Careggi; and, six years later, Savonarola was burnt alive in the great square of Florence.

CORSICA AND SARDINIA.

The Pisans, who, in the eleventh century, accepted a grant of Corsica as a fief of the Holy See, were able to expel the Saracens, and under their rule the island was feudalized. After the battle of Meloria had annihilated their power, they, in 1300, formally resigned the province to the Genoese, who, however, were not able to consolidate their authority for very many years. They remained masters of it till the eighteenth century; but their severe rule, succeeding the mild government of Pisa, long excited fierce insurrections, in which some factions attempted to establish national independence, while others assisted the kings of Spain in enforcing claims, raised under a charter of Pope Boniface VIII. It ought to be mentioned that from 1453 Corsica properly belonged, not to the state of Genoa, but to the Genoese Bank of Saint George, to which the authorities were obliged to assign its revenues in security of unpaid debts.

The Corsicans charged their new masters with a systematic violation of those privileges, which were covenanted when they were allowed to occupy the island. These were the following. The people were to be governed by their own code of laws, the Statuto di Corsica; and in the supreme court half of the judges were to be natives and half Genoese. The province was to be administered, under the superintendence of the Genoese Senate, by the ancient magistracy, who seem to have been the same to whom the Corsican writers gave the name of Caporali. These were eighteen native nobles elected periodically by the inhabitants, one of whom, called the Orator, resided at Genoa, and represented the island in the senate. No tax was to be imposed without being approved by the eighteen; and for salt, a government monopoly, no price was to be exacted above a certain maximum.*

* Limperani, Istoria della Corsica, 1780, tom. ii. p. 124. Cambiagi, Istoria del Regno di Corsica, 1770, tom. i. p. 311. Compare the older constitution with Paoli's, described in Boswell's Corsica, chapter iii.

The history of Sardinia in the middle ages was very similar to that of its neighbour. Early in the eleventh century, the Pisans and Genoese jointly attacked the Moorish settlements on its shores; and in 1050, the infidels being completely expelled, the province was divided into fiefs, which were apportioned among noble families belonging to both cities. Frederick II. erected it into a nominal kingdom for his natural son, the unfortunate Heinsius; but the only change which took place in the actual possession was the usurpation of the whole island by the Pisans, who lost it with their other conquests after their defeat at Meloria; and a grant to the Aragonese kings, issued by the liberal Pope Boniface, was made effectual by Alfonso in 1326.

In 1354, Pedro the Cruel of Aragon, who had just completed at home his reforms of the Cortes, established a representative constitution in Sardinia. The parliament, which was called the Stamenti, was divided into three chambers, containing respectively the barons, the prelates, and the deputies of the towns. For administrative purposes the island had been formed, in the eleventh century, into four provinces, Cagliari, Arborea, Torres, and Gallura; the government of each being intrusted hereditarily to a separate lord, who was called the Giudice or Judge, and was a feudatory of the paramount sovereigns. The mutual jealousies and personal ambition of these officers, who were preserved by the Spaniards till towards the close of the middle ages, gave rise to many scenes of wild warfare; but the only incident which calls for notice is the promulgation, in 1395, of the code called the Carta di Logu, which is still the law-book of the Sards. It was planned by an ambitious and energetic woman, Eleonora, the hereditary "Giudicessa" of Arborea. At length the Aragonese kings, sending a Spanish nobleman to reside constantly as Viceroy, divided the island under him into two governments, those of Cagliari and Logudoro, whose administrators were sometimes natives. Local magistrates were appointed, called Podestà or Capudianu, subordinate to

the Royal Vicar and other supreme judges, civil and criminal.*

THE POLITICAL STATE OF ITALY IN 1500.

In the last years of the fifteenth century, the politics of Italy underwent a violent revolution. The greater part of Christendom was now formed into a few extensive monarchies. France had become at length one consolidated realm, the English having been expelled, and the vassals of the crown subdued; the kingdoms of Spain were united under Ferdinand and Isabella; and the Emperor Maximilian, possessing Austria and Burgundy, vigorously asserted the decayed prerogatives of the imperial crown. All these powers cast longing eyes on the paradise of Europe; and the passage of the Alps in 1494 by Charles VIII. of France, the vain son of the crafty Louis XI., was the first act in that long drama of foreign aggression, which has not yet reached its catastrophe.

Among the plains of the north, Lodovico Sforza the Moor, first regent and then duke of Milan, acted as the pioneer of the French. Venice, standing selfishly neutral, compelled the Este in Ferrara and the Gonzaga in Mantua to do so likewise. Farther south, the invaders were unsuccessfully resisted by a league embracing the Aragonese king of Naples, Pope Alexander VI., and the nominal republics of Tuscany; these last being headed by Florence, then subject to the showy and unwise Pietro II., the son of Lorenzo de' Medici. The armies of Charles overran the whole peninsula, and the next few years were fruitful in bloodshed and vicissitudes.

In 1500, Louis XII., the new king of France, possessed the duchy of Milan, to which he asserted, on insufficient grounds, a hereditary right, through one of his female ancestors. Frederic, the last Aragonese king

* Smyth's Sardinia, chapter i. 1828. Grævii Thesaur. Siciliæ, tom. xv.; Apparatus ad Vitalis Annales, p. 35-38. The native writers are Manno and Della Marmora, both in 1826.

of Naples, had reconquered the Two Sicilies, but had no hope of retaining them unless he should be assisted by his kinsman Ferdinand of Spain. Florence, having expelled the Medici in 1494, was fully occupied in preparing to defend her regained freedom. Pope Alexander, through the services of his infamous son Cesar Borgia, had reduced the rebellious vassals of the See in Romagna, but had extreme difficulty in preventing the re-establishment of petty tyrannies in the towns. Venice followed her former policy, which was imitated by her neighbours of Ferrara and Mantua, as also by the princes in Piedmont.

The knell of freedom in Italy had already rung ; and, when her history shall next address us, its voice will sound like lamentation over the dead. But, while we watched her national independence during its tempestuous struggle of centuries, we have been in danger of forgetting that there then arose monuments yet more illustrious than principalities or commonwealths,—that fruits then were gathered fairer still than those of political glory. Now, therefore, turning aside for a while, from scenes of public tumult, we enter the garden of Italian literature and art, a romantic nook yet unexplored in our pilgrimage through the region of the middle ages.

CHAPTER IV.

Italian Literature in the Middle Ages.

A.D. 1000—A.D. 1500.

FIRST PERIOD:—THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES:—The Scholastic Philosophy—Schools of Law—Chronicles—The New Italian Language—Early Sicilian Poetry. SECOND PERIOD:—THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES:—Mental Character of the Times—The Learning of the Thirteenth Century—Saint Thomas Aquinas—The Golden Legend—Rise of the Italian Universities—Troubadours—Sordello the Mantuan—Frederic the Second—Pietro delle Vigne—Prose Writers—*Dante Alighieri*—His Life and Works—His Divina Commedia—Its Character—Analysis of its Plan—The Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso—*Petrarch and Boccaccio*—Their Classical Studies—Petrarch's Life and Works—His Love-Poems—Boccaccio's Minor Works—His Decameron—Other Novelists—Sacchetti—*Florentine Chroniclers*—Dino Compagni and the Villani. THIRD PERIOD:—THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY:—An Age of Erudition—Printing introduced in Italy—*The First Fifty Years*—Poggio—The Classical Scholars—Wandering Minstrels and Chivalrous Romances—*The Age of Lorenzo the Magnificent*—Philosophy in Florence—Politian's Learning and Poetry—Lorenzo's Poems—Chivalrous Romances at Court—Pulci's Morgante Maggiore—Its Anomalous Character—Boiardo's Orlando Innamorato—Its Rudeness and Originality.

FIRST PERIOD.

THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES.

IN the two centuries which are here classed together, we stand at the threshold of Italian literature. The time was one neither of sluggishness nor of performance, but of active and earnest preparation; and therefore it cannot be properly classed either with the dark ages or with the magnificent era of the revival. It witnessed

in Italy, as we have seen, three great events; the establishment of the ecclesiastical supremacy, the emancipation of the imperial cities, and the foundation of the Norman dynasty. Each of these occurrences had its peculiar influence on mental cultivation, and the effects were strikingly apparent in the twelfth century.*

The church was supported, in the European courts, by a few men who united political activity with knowledge and literary skill much beyond those of their predecessors. Among such, the highest place belongs to two Italian ecclesiastics of the eleventh century, successively archbishops of Canterbury; Lanfranc, a Pavian, whom William the Conqueror brought with him from Normandy; and his successor Anselm. Other churchmen devoted themselves, in the closet, to theology and its kindred sciences, especially dialectics and other branches of metaphysics. To students of this class, flourishing in the first half of the twelfth century, belongs the rise of the scholastic philosophy, which found its elements (so far as these were original) in the works of Pietro Lombardo, surnamed "The Master of Sentences." The less ambitious monks continued to indite chronicles and legends; while some of them employed themselves less creditably in foretelling future events. The most famous of the prophets was the Abbot Joachim, a Cistercian of Calabria, who in 1190 hazarded his reputation by promising in Sicily, to Cœur de Lion and Philip of France, complete success in the third crusade.

The earliest literary fruits of independence in the cities, were legal seminaries and historical chronicles.

* The leading authorities on Italian literature are these:—For facts and biography, Tiraboschi's voluminous Storia della Letteratura Italiana; for critical analyses, Ginguené's Histoire Littéraire d' Italie, and its continuation by Salfi; and for criticism on a few selected authors, Sismondi's Littérature du Midi de l'Europe. Much may be learned from two Italian works written early in last century, those of Crescimbeni and Quadrio; and a more recent history of Italian literature, which enjoys considerable reputation, is Corniani's, continued by Ugoni. There is also a judicious compendium (2d edition, 1834), by Maffei of Munich.

Ravenna had its law-school, adorned till the year 1072 by the canonist Saint Peter Damian. The more celebrated academy of Bologna was founded about the end of the eleventh century by Irnerius; and the Bolognese Glossators gave reputation to it for a century and a half longer, spreading the Roman law over Europe, and sending to England, Vacarius, one of the ablest among them. Many civic chronicles of this period are extant, the earliest of which was composed in the time of Gregory VII.

Naples and Sicily also produced chronicles, which are numerous; and this region, indeed, during the partial exemption from wars which it owed to the establishment of the duchy of Beneventum, had been less deeply ignorant than the remainder of the country. If the wide commerce and splendid cultivation of Amalfi be apocryphal, the merit of the medical school at Salerno is not so. It had existed from the tenth century, borrowing its rules from the science of the Saracens, and was the most famous establishment of the kind in Europe till it was ruined by the new studies of the universities.

But the southern provinces did even more than this. We have yet seen no living language in Italy; for prophets, divines, statesmen, chroniclers, and physicians, all used the barbarous Latin of their times. When the Italian tongue began to form itself, Naples and Sicily were the seats of its infancy; the latest Norman sovereigns were, in their luxurious and half-oriental court, its first patrons; and poetry was of course its earliest application. The oldest verses which have been recovered in any dialect of the modern Italian, are the rude Sicilian rhymes attributed to Ciullo of Alcamo, which, from their naming the great Saladin as alive, must have been written about or before 1193, the year of his death. The progress of the language till it reached the point at which we are next to take it up, must be learned from other sources than these pages; but its general character, as a corrupted Latin, is admitted in all the theories, and the chief question is, the amount of corruption it received from the Germanic tongues.

SECOND PERIOD.

THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES.

These ages in Italy combine within their limits more of the great and the beautiful, the heroic and the guilty, more of intellectual activity wedded to intellectual weakness, than any other period of her history. We have seen this singular union exemplified in her political vicissitudes: it is not less vividly displayed in the annals of her literature. The grand works of the period are those of the Trecentisti, as their countrymen call them, that is, the writers in the fourteenth century, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio; but the spirit which pervades the compositions of these illustrious men was extracted from that wild medley of irreconcilable elements, which hovered around them like the spectres of a goblin's cave, a vision whose gloom seemed even to thicken as time rolled on. The religion of those ages began with the stern dissent of the Albigenses and other reformers, with the consequent alarm of the church, and with the institution of the two mendicant orders, to resist the torrent of heterodoxy; and it thence proceeded in a temper strangely combined, in which the implicit devotion inspired by the miracle-working saints, and the dogmatizing theology taught by the schoolmen, were alike counteracted by a secret unbelief, which increased with the increasing study of the classics, and was far from uncommon in the fourteenth century. Science was then a mixture of knowledge, acuteness, and deplorable ignorance. Its horizon was wide, even wider than it is in modern times; but the medium through which it saw every object was false and exciting. To the eye of the philosophical student in the middle ages, the world resembled a wide and lofty hall, lighted only by the wavering flame of a single taper. The metaphysicians applied their skilful dialectics to attempts at discovering unattainable facts; the followers of natural science venerated equally the dreams of the alchemists and the prophecies of the judicial astrologers, some

of whom, like Cecco of Ascoli in this age, expiated at the stake, not the vanity of their art, but its rash intrusions within the pale of the dogmatical theology. The political aspect of the times has been already sketched; and its wild irregularity has exhibited, amidst a greatness rudely stern, much of that moral corruption which was so common in every shape from murder to debauchery, and which the authorities of the church in vain attempted to check, while its members individually were often worse sinners than the laymen. Italian poetry, or at all events that of the thirteenth century, was the voice of an infant-language, and borrowed from the Provençal Troubadours, then in their full honour, many of its forms and very much of its spirit. The popular activity of the republics still free, was rivalled or surpassed, in its patronage of native genius, by all the sovereigns from one end of the land to the other,—from the Suabian kings in Naples and their spoilers of Anjou, to the Ferrarese princes of Este and the Veronese Scaligeri among the roots of the Alps.

It is necessary to become acquainted with a few details regarding the learning of the thirteenth century, as introductory to our review of the lighter studies. The scholastic philosophy was perfected; and the chief credit of that severe system of mental training belongs to "The Angelic Doctor," Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225—1274), whose noble birth at Aquino, his boyish entrance into the Dominican order, his self-denying absorption in religious and scientific study, and his death at the romantic abbey of Fossanuova near Terracina, form together a complete picture of the lives led by the early schoolmen.* None of the other metaphysical theologians call for notice, if we except the Tuscan friend and rival of St Thomas, the Franciscan saint, Buonavventura (1221—1274). The works of these two canonized doctors were

* Consult (in the Encyclopedia Metropolitana, part 37) Dr Hampden's Life of Thomas Aquinas, and its accompanying sketch of the Scholastic Philosophy.

mainly intended for the clergy: the mass of the laity received different instruction. Though the miracles of both the philosophical saints were set up as joint evidences of orthodoxy by the church, they were pitted, by the Dominicans and Franciscans, against each other; and the temper of the clergy, and ignorance of the laymen, may be estimated from the famous "Golden Legend" of Saints and Martyrs, compiled, late in the thirteenth century, by a Genoese friar named Jacopo Da Voragine.

The study of the Latin language now became a little more accurate; Greek and the Oriental tongues were loosely learned by some ecclesiastics; and the great Italian universities were organized before the end of the fourteenth century. To the law-school of Bologna were added faculties of medicine and arts before 1300; and a theological faculty, instituted by Innocent VI., completed the institution. The university of Padua was founded in 1222 by teachers and scholars from Bologna, who emigrated in one of the frequent feuds with the citizens. The university of Pisa was originally endowed by the corporation in 1338, and erected by a papal bull in 1344. These establishments were at first voluntary associations of students, brought and kept together by the reputation of particular teachers. Other Italian academies of some eminence in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, can be reckoned up to the number of at least eleven, some of which had patents as universities, and most of them embraced the university-curriculum. The list includes a law-school at Rome, opened by Innocent IV., and a university at Naples, founded by Frederic II. in 1224. Both Bologna and Padua had chairs for judicial astrology.*

The oldest notices which the thirteenth century offers in the poetical history of Italy, relate visits paid by

* See Tiraboschi; or, for fuller details, Savigny, Geschichte des Rechts, vol. iii. chap. 21: and vol. iv. chaps. 26, 27, 28, and 36.

minstrels from the south of France, and give half-fabulous accounts of a few Italian Troubadours, who have left some fragments in the Provençal language. The most famous of these were three :—Bartolommeo Giorgi of Venice, who died in Castile, where his legend makes him fall in love with the king's daughter ; his friend Bonifazio Calvi, a Genoese ; and the still more celebrated Sordello of Mantua, whose apocryphal history creates him the paladin of valorous troubadours.* His "hermit-shadow" it is that guides Dante into purgatory.† Sordello is said to have composed verses in Italian : but he had been preceded by a royal poet, the unfortunate Frederic II., some of whose rhymes are extant ; and the king's example was imitated by his versatile and accomplished chancellor, the lawyer Pietro delle Vigne, who, in the year 1249, perished by his own hand after his master had put out his eyes, upon a charge, true or false, of conspiracy and treason. Between that time and the end of the century, many new poets arose, chiefly Sicilians and Tuscans, whose remaining works, rude and but seldom touching, do not call for criticism. It is enough if we remark, that the language in their hands already appears in a shape scarcely differing from its classical one in the succeeding age ;—that they borrowed from the troubadours their cold conceits, and many of their forms, especially that of the Canzone, which still continues to be an authorized vehicle of Italian lyrical poetry ;—and that the Sonnet also appears before 1300, having apparently been invented in Sicily.‡ Dante's praise induces mention of his dearest friend Guido Cavalcanti, and of his teacher Brunetto Latini, both of whom flourished in this era. The miscellaneous knowledge contained in the "Tesoro" of Brunetto was couched in the French tongue ; and his versified "Tesoretto" has been supposed, on plausible grounds, to

* The details are collected and criticised by Tiraboschi, tom. iv. lib. iii. cap. 2.

† Purgatorio, canto vi. v. 72.

‡ Ginguené, tome i. chapitre 6.

have furnished to his illustrious pupil the skeleton of the greatest among Italian poems.* Prose literature now, as well as poetry, assumed the living language; and two writers belonging to the same time may be considered as the founders of Italian history:—Matteo Spinello of Naples, whose work ends with 1281, and the Florentine Ricordano Malespini, who died about that year, leaving a chronicle whose style has been pronounced a model of the simple Tuscan.

Before the end of that century, Dante or Durante Alighieri (1265—1321) had not only formed his manner of thought and writing, but had probably composed a part of his immortal poem. He was the son of a distinguished Florentine family; he enjoyed the best education which the city afforded; and, while his own temper and that of the day concurred in leading him into profound theological study, his classical pursuits were clearly directed by a higher taste than that of his age, as is especially evinced by his admiration of Virgil. A boyish attachment to Beatrice Portinari was converted, by her death in 1290, into a sentiment of religious adoration; and the sad imagination of the poet ever afterwards turned to his youthful love, as the source alike of his creative genius and of the happiness for which he hoped in another world. These, however, were but dreams, and did not restrain the Florentine burgher from action. He was engaged in the wars of the republic during the very year of Beatrice's death; he rose from rank to rank; in 1291 he contracted a marriage which proved every way unhappy; and at the age of thirty-five he was elected one of the Priors. A quarrel between the two Guelf divisions, the Neri and Bianchi, gave rise to some severe sentences, in which Alighieri, himself attached to the latter faction, was accused of partiality in office; the pope, Boniface VIII., fearing this party, into which many of the old

* Ginguene, tome ii. chap. viii. sect. 1.

Ghibellines had entered, assisted Charles of Valois in restoring by force the exiled Neri. In 1302, the poet was sentenced to banishment and confiscation; and a subsequent judgment condemned him and his friends to be burned alive if captured. The remaining twenty years of his life were spent in wandering, poverty, and sorrow. His faction having in vain attempted to reconquer Florence by their own arms, and by the aid of the emperor Henry VII. of Luxembourg, Dante roamed from the court of the Scala at Verona, through most of the northern provinces of Italy, and even as far as Paris; and at length died broken-hearted at Ravenna under the protection of its lord, Guido da Polenta.

He left compositions both in prose and verse, in Latin and Italian. His Sonnets and Canzoni have a merit which is only eclipsed by that of his own great poem. The "Vita Nuova" consists of those verses which he devoted to Beatrice, both before and after her death, and which he connects by a prose narrative, embellished with many flights of imagination, detailing the circumstances in which the rhymes were severally composed. His "Convito" or Banquet, is a long mystical commentary on three of his Canzoni. Besides these works in the modern tongue, he wrote two in Latin. In the treatise "De Monarchiâ," addressing himself to Henry VII., he endeavours to prove the benefits of a universal empire, the right of the Romans to exercise it, and its immediate dependence on God, without recourse to the popes or other divine vicars. The unfinished essay "De Vulgari Eloquentiâ," relates the history of the new Italian language, and criticises some of the poems which had been already composed in it. The distrust which the writer entertained as to the capabilities of the spoken tongue is shown by the fact, that he began in Latin hexameters his great poem, the "Divina Commedia," which, as rewritten, became the highest model of the modern language.

This extraordinary work, which places Dante's name first among those of all Italian poets ancient or modern,

and nearly first among all the poets of Christian Europe, describes, in one hundred cantos, a vision of the three Catholic worlds of the dead,—Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven, —allotting, besides an introductory canto, thirty-three cantos to each. It is impossible to sketch its plan briefly, and at the same time to exhibit, with any fairness, the character of the genius which it displays; and we must recollect at the outset, that it is the colouring of particular scenes which gives to the poem its most obvious charm, and that the age in which it was conceived was one marked by partial knowledge, by unrefined taste in literature, by infancy in art, and by almost demoniacal passions in the intercourse of life, both public and private. In politics, Dante is at once a worshipper of freedom, and a Ghibelline or enemy of the popedom; in religion he is by turns a scholastic disputer, an adoring mystic, a stern reproacher of ecclesiastical vices. In better times he would have been a patriotic Florentine; but his wrongs, his hatreds, and his party attachments, master, at every struggle, his love for his country, of which indeed there remains little except a sickly longing for its soil, mixing strangely with a universal scorn of its inhabitants. The utterance which is incessantly given to these personal feelings, often at the expense of much that is sacred and good, is the most unpleasing feature in the composition; but the very same peculiarity contributes not a little to give it that air of reality which it so impressively wears. Its ruling poetical character is that of stern sublimity, abrupt, concentrated, never vague though often wild, sometimes melting into overflowing tenderness, and every where seen through a cloud of imagery, whose shapes are sketched with astonishing brevity, yet with unexcelled picturesqueness.

The first canto, introductory to the whole work, describes the circumstances in which the supposed vision presented itself. The poet, in the year 1300, loses his way by night in a gloomy mountainous wood, the situation of which he cannot tell, nor how he came thither. At daybreak his path is obstructed by three beasts of

prey, from whom he is rescued by the figure of a man who is hoarse as if by reason of long silence. The protector, declaring himself to be Virgil, offers to guide his pupil through the world of shadows.

In the second canto, which is properly the opening of the Inferno or first division, the two pilgrims commence their mysterious journey. Virgil informs Dante that, in the limbo where he with other virtuous heathens reposed, he had been accosted by a beautiful female, descending from the bowers of the blessed, who had ordered him to succour the friend who loved her. The third canto opens abruptly with the terrible words of the celebrated inscription. The poet's eye is caught by it as he looks up to a gate which faces him, the entrance to the place of punishment.* Virgil stretches out his hand to him, and they enter the unblest abode. Sounds of grief and anger meet the ear, a confused tumult like that of the desert in a whirlwind. They are in the region appropriated to those, both men and angels, who have lived without infamy, yet without praise,—those who have neither stood nor fallen.† The adventurers next reach a gloomy river which shuts in the everlasting prison, where, while the grim ferryman refuses to convey them across, the ground shakes, and a wind rises from its bosom, through which flashes a red light. Dante falls in a swoon, and, awakened by a clap of thunder, finds himself transported to the other side of the flood, and gazing down into the dark abyss, from which ascend cries of agony.

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* Through me ye pass into the city of woe:
Through me ye pass into eternal pain;
Through me, among the people lost for aye.
Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
To rear me was the task of Power divine,
Supremest Wisdom, and primeval Love.
Before me things create were none, save things
Eternal, and eternal I endure.
All hope abandon, ye who enter here.
Cary's Translation of Dante; Inferno, canto iii.

† Fame of them the world hath none,
Nor suffers; mercy and justice scorn them both.
Speak not of them, but look and pass them by.
Cary, canto iii.

He figures his hell as consisting of nine concentric circles, one below another, converging like the steps of an amphitheatre, or the interior of a hollow cone, and terminating in the centre of the earth. The poets are already in the first or uppermost circle, in which, not tormented, but grieving with eternal sighs, are the souls of the heathen, of infants, and the rest of the unbaptized. From a bright illumination shining through the gloomy crowd, there approach to salute Virgil four honoured shades, Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan, who admit Dante as a sixth into "that famous company." In a fresh green meadow, surrounded by a sevenfold fortification and a moat, are the souls of antique heroes and sages, among whom the poet has the courage to place, not only the Arab teachers Averrhoes and Avicenna, but even Saladin himself, the bugbear of Europe during the crusading times.

From the quiet of this circle, Virgil and his pupil descend into the second, where the actual torments of hell commence. Minos, transformed by the Florentine poet, like the other pagan deities, into a strange and grisly shape, which is best illustrated by Orcagna's paintings at Pisa, sits at the entrance of the circle, and assigns to the condemned spirits their places according to the measure of their guilt, the worst crimes being sunk deepest. This region, deprived of light, is agitated like a sea, by winds incessantly crossing each other, and wafting with them shrieks and sobs. It is the place of carnal sinners, among whom the pilgrim first beholds, hurried backwards and forwards by the tempest, Semiramis, Dido, Cleopatra, Helen, Achilles, Paris, and the knight Tristram. After these comes the group in which the poet's pathos has been so justly admired, that of Francesca da Polenta (the daughter of his protector Guido), and her lover Paolo di Malatesta of Rimini.* Neither description nor translation can convey the broken-hearted tenderness which breathes through this

* Inferno, canto v.

tale of guilty love more guiltily avenged, of love stronger than death, and lasting as its own eternal punishment. While the two condemned shades weep before him, Dante faints with compassion. On recovering, he finds himself in the third circle, where the gluttonous, tormented by a demon named Cerberus, lie amidst icy mud, while incessant hail and rain pour down on them. One of them predicts to the exile the future fate of his party in Florence. In the fourth circle, the avaricious and prodigal, doomed to the same punishment, are violently driven against each other by incessant gusts of wind. In this wretched crowd are seen many tonsured heads of priests, cardinals, and popes; but their degrading vices and the gloomy air make their features undistinguishable.* On the edge of this region there boils up a black fountain, discharging its waters into the fifth circle, where it forms the river Styx, amidst the mud of which lie, naked and struggling, the souls of those whose master-sin was anger.

A bark rowed by a demon conveys the voyagers across the stagnant expanse, beyond which rise iron walls and fiery towers, like the minarets of mosques, from whose battlements numberless fiends, headed by the furies, oppose the entrance of a living man. A terrific sound heralds the approach of an incensed angel, who, not deigning to address the poets, touches the gate with a rod, on which it flies open. These fortifications shut in the city of Dis, which includes the four remaining circles of punishment, forming a deeper hell within hell itself. The sixth circle, the first of those inner ones, is an immense plain covered with tombs, around each of which there flicker raging flames, and from beneath the lifted covers issue loud lamentations. This is the seat of the heresiarchs, among whom Dante converses with the brave Florentine Farinata degli Uberti, and learns that Frederic II. suffers in a neighbouring sepulchre, while the last of the range contains Pope Anastasius II.

* Inferno, canto vii.

Within this field of graves yawns a horrible and pestilential gulf, containing the last three circles, respectively appropriated to those who have sinned by violence, by fraud, and by treachery. The seventh circle, guarded by the Minotaur and by Centaurs, is fenced with a river of blood. In the gory stream are punished those who were guilty of outrage against mankind, by practising tyranny or cruelty; and among them are named Alexander the Great, Dionysius, Eccelino, and Attila. In the second division of this region, beyond the river, those who have been by suicide guilty of violence towards themselves, are converted into trees with knotty trunks and dark leaves, bearing instead of fruit prickles and poison, and perched on by the hideous harpies. Dante, by his master's order, plucks a branch, when blood and cries issue together from the trunk, out of which the soul of the unfortunate Pietro Delle Vigne speaks and proclaims himself innocent of the imputed treason.* Within a ring formed by this spectral forest is a sandy plain, on which are scattered naked shadows, tormented by flakes of fire which rain slowly on them, as snow falls on the Alps in a calm. These have been violent or rebellious against God; and next to them, in a stream of blood which flows through this waste from the tears of a giant-statue of Time, are tortured also those who have done violence to nature or to art; among whom a place is assigned to the usurers.†

The rocks which bound the seventh circle, descend in tremendous precipices to the next one, and the river falls in an awful cataract. A huge demon, called Geryon, and personifying Fraud, ascends in obedience to a spell used by Virgil, who then mounts on the monster's back, taking his companion in his arms; and the fiend, poising himself in the thick and lurid air, sinks with them along the face of the cataract, and deposits them at the foot of the cliff, amidst the cries and fiery glare of the eighth circle.‡ This gulf, the prison of the fraudulent, is

* Inferno, canto xiii. † Ibid. canto xiv.

‡ Ibid. cantos xvi. and xvii.

divided into ten concentric fosses, or "bolge," each of which confines a distinct class of sinners, the whole circle receiving the name of Malebolge. It is the favourite scene of the poet's overwhelming invectives and personal satires on his enemies. The outer bolgia contains the deceivers of women, who are constantly chased and lashed by devils. The second is the prison of flatterers, whose punishment is filthily disgusting. In the third range are tortured those who have committed simony. This fosse is perforated with burning apertures, in each of which a sinner is plunged head foremost; and amongst them Dante, with a bitter ingenuity of malice, has contrived to place three contemporary popes,—one dead before the time when the supposed action of his poem is laid, a second, still alive at that date, and a third, who was not then so much as elected.* The fourth division is that of the false prophets, who have their heads twisted round to their backs; and among these wizards our countryman Michael Scott receives due honour.† In the fifth ring, those who have committed malversation in office are plunged into a lake of boiling pitch; and in the sixth, the hypocrites walk without ceasing in slow procession clothed in ponderous leaden capotes, gilded outside, with hoods which (like those still worn by the religious fraternities of laymen) allow only the eyes to be seen. In the seventh bolgia, which is reached with difficulty, are the thieves, whose punishment is savage. They are continually pursued and devoured by serpents, which, themselves condemned souls, no sooner destroy their victims than they change bodies with them.‡ Through the eighth

* Inferno, canto xix. The three popes are, Nicholas III., Boniface VIII., and Clement V.

† Ibid. canto xx.

‡ Ibid. cantos xxiv. xxv. Several are Florentines; and Dante, before passing to the eighth fosse, bitingly exclaims,

> Florence, exult! for thou so mightily
> Hast thriven, that o'er land and sea thy wings
> Thou beatest, and thy name spreads over hell!
>
> Cary; opening of canto xxvi.

valley* flit innumerable masses of flame, each of which encloses an evil counsellor.† In the ninth bolgia, are those who have sown heresies, dissensions, and scandals; such as Mohammed, his disciple Ali, and others, who are disfigured by horrible wounds and mutilations.‡ Bertrand de Born, the famous troubadour, is among them, and carries his head in his hand. In the tenth and last bolgia, various sorts of falsifiers, including coiners, alchemists, and similar deluders, are punished by diseases, such as leprosy, dropsy, and fever.§

The pilgrims move on in silence through a thick darkness, when suddenly there is heard the blast of a horn, louder than that which the dying Roland blew at Roncesvalles;‖ and the poet sees through the gloom three portentous shapes like towers. These are three giants, Nimrod, Ephialtes, and Antæus, who stand in the deep hollow shaft which forms the centre of the abyss, but are taller than its sides. Antæus lifts both travellers with one hand, stoops with them, and sets them down at his feet. They are now in the ninth and lowest circle of hell, a wintry lake, where, in four divisions, traitors are entombed in ice up to the neck, shedding tears, which freeze on their faces as they fall.¶ In the first division, called Caïna, are treacherous assassins, among whom are Charlemagne's betrayer Ganelon, and Mordred, King Arthur's parricidal son or nephew. The

* As, in that season when the sun least veils
His face that lightens all, what time the fly
Gives way to the shrill gnat, the peasant then,
Upon some cliff reclined, beneath him sees
Fire-flies innumerous spangling o'er the vale,
Vineyard or tilth, where his day-labour lies;
With flames so numberless, throughout its space
Shone the eighth chasm apparent when the depth
Was to my view exposed.

Cary, canto xxvi.

† Inferno, cantos xxvi. xxvii. The story of Guido da Montefeltro is well worthy of notice, on account of its wild legend about the flight of Saint Francis with the devil for the sinner's soul, in which the demon is too quick for the saint.

‡ Ibid. canto xxviii.

§ Ibid. cantos xxix. xxx.

‖ Ibid. canto xxxi.

¶ Ibid. canto xxxii.

second sphere, called Antenora, imprisons those who have betrayed their country; and its principal group is that horrible one of the Archbishop Ruggiero and Count Ugolino of Pisa, whose fiercely moving story of his own death and that of his sons in the Tower of Famine is universally considered as Dante's masterpiece.* In Ptolomea, the third icy region, are those who have betrayed their benefactors; and a similar class of sinners are found in the fourth, called Giudecca from its chief culprit Judas Iscariot, beside whom, oddly enough, are placed Brutus and Cassius.† In this last sphere, the condemned lie beneath the ice, silent and motionless like images; while over them wave the six wings of Lucifer, a terrific giant, buried up to the middle in the frozen mass that fills the central chasm of the earth.

Virgil, seizing Dante, climbs up the demon's side, and thence clambers among the rocks which form the roots of the opposite terrestrial hemisphere. A falling brook guides them upward; the sky appears through the round opening of a cavern, and they emerge into the light of the stars.

If this naked sketch does injustice even to the Inferno, whose outline, with all its strangeness, is both vast and awfully strong, the two other parts of the poem would appear to yet greater disadvantage in such a bird's eye view. Their leading incidents are few; theological discussions and mystical allegories, frequent in the Purgatory, become incessant in the Paradise; and the chief pleasure which modern readers can derive from either of these sections, must be sought in their richly scattered beauties,—their frequent glimpses of poetic vision, and those many groups which possess dramatic pathos.

The first nine cantos of the Purgatorio are the most attractive. The scene of the action is a lofty mountain; and around its base, which the wanderers first reach on issuing from the gulf, lie valleys, waters, and plains, among which linger the souls of the indolent,

* Inferno, canto xxxiii. † Ibid. canto xxxiv.

and other spirits not yet permitted to commence their course of purification. On approaching this spot, and at the very opening of the poem, Dante breaks out into a burst of rapturous delight, which clothes every object around him with celestial loveliness. The sky is deeply coloured like oriental sapphire; Venus, the fair planet of love, sheds her smile over the east; and high at the pole gleam four mysterious stars, never yet seen by mortal eye since they had shone on Adam's paradise.* Cato of Utica conducts the travellers through this first region. An angel guides across the sea a bark filled with human souls, who are on their way to the place of expiation, and chant the psalm of the Israelites released from bondage.† The unfortunate Manfred of Naples, one of the souls not yet admitted to sanctifying penance, appeals to heaven from the sentence of the popes, and charges Dante with a message of consolation for his daughter.‡ In the mutual affection of Sordello the Mantuan troubadour, and his countryman Virgil, the poet finds a theme of scornful indignation against Florence and all Italy.§ Amidst a green and delightful valley, a group of monarchs, who had deferred repentance, repose and sing evening hymns.‖ After several other scenes and apparitions, the gates which enclose the mount open like thunder; the two pilgrims enter; and instantly the place resounds with the sweet strains of the *Te Deum Laudamus*, reminding the Florentine of the organ-peal in churches accompanying the voices of the congregation.¶ The sides of the mountain, which have been now reached, compose Purgatory proper. They are

* Purgatorio, canto i.
† Ibid. canto ii. Psalm cxiv: "In exitu Israel de Ægypto."
‡ Ibid. canto iii. § Ibid. canto vi.
‖ Now was the hour that wakens fond desire
In men at sea, and melts their thoughtful heart
Who in the morn have bid sweet friends farewell;
And pilgrim, newly on his road, with love
Thrills, if he hear the vesper-bell from far,
That seems to mourn for the expiring day.
Ibid. canto viii. v. 1; Cary.
¶ Ibid. canto ix.

divided into seven successive terraces, on each of which one of the seven deadly sins is expiated by a symbolical but corporeal punishment. The sufferers are sad, but sad with hope ; and ever and anon the top of the sacred hill trembles, and thence resounds the hymn of the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, sung by the guardian spirits of the place when they dismiss a purified soul to the bliss of heaven.* The reason of the song is explained by the poet Statius, who declares himself to have been secretly a Christian. On the summit, to which the adventurers issue through a wall of flame, is the earthly Paradise; and upon its verge Dante lies a whole night, gazing at the stars, and beholding a vision of the young Leah, the symbol, in the middle ages, of the active life, as Rachel was of the contemplative.† In the last six cantos, amidst the sylvan scenery of Eden, allegorical spectacles illustrate the glory of the church ; and, from a cloud of flowers scattered by angels, Beatrice, the minstrel's early idol, the inspirer of his song, and identified in his soul with religion his highest study, descends to conduct her lover to the bowers of heaven.‡

In the Paradiso, Dante and Beatrice, mystically raised by the mere force of aspiration, are borne from planet to planet, contemplating the happiness of the elect, discussing points of faith, and at last, in the sun, witnessing a disclosure of the divine glory, in the midst of which the poet breaks off, unable to bear, far less to describe, the entrancing majesty of the revelation.

The enthusiasm excited by Dante's Vision was universal, and seems to have been roused by the publication of fragments before the work was completed.§ His unfortunate libeller, the astrologer and poet Francesco Stabili, commonly called Cecco d'Ascoli, who was burned by the Inquisition at Florence in the year 1327 as a wizard and heretic, is even said to have partly owed his

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* Purgatorio, canto xx. † Ibid. canto xxvii.

‡ Ibid. canto xxx.

§ See the two stories told by Sacchetti, Novelle 114, 115.

fate to the indignation of the great Florentine's countrymen, too late repenting of their blindness. Fazio degli Uberti, a grandson of the noble Farinata, composed a poem called the Dittamondo, which gives a view of the living world, imitated from Dante's dream of the dead. Lectureships were founded in various universities and cities for the sole purpose of explaining the Commedia, not, indeed, its poetry or its historical allusions, but the profound philosophical doctrines which were supposed to lie concealed under every sentence it contained.*

But fortunately, by all except Uberti, the masterpiece of Italian literature was held too sacred for imitation. The taste of the nation, still fostered both in courts and in the republics, developed itself farther in the direction which it had taken before Alighieri, and from which his daringly original work was a deviation. France continued to be the poetical teacher of Italy; and to the lyrics of her southern Troubadours was now added the narrative poetry of the Trouvères from the north, including both the chivalrous romances and those lighter tales called Fabliaux. The poetry of the Provençals became the model of Petrarch, as it had been that of Dante in his Canzoni, though in none of his other works. The fabliaux gave rise to the Italian prose novels, of which Boccaccio, though the best writer, was very far from being the earliest. The chivalrous romances were seized by more obscure writers, who translated several of them into Italian prose in the course of the fourteenth century.

Of the three great cycles of romance, that of Charlemagne, his paladins, and his house, was from the first the favourite. Very soon after Dante's time, it furnished one prose romance at least that still exists, "Il Povero Avveduto," being the story which was versified

* The mantle of the old commentators has fallen, in our own days, upon a learned and ingenious Italian, residing in London. See the "Divina Commedia, con Commento" (1826-7), and the essay "Sullo Spirito Antipapale de' Classici Antichi d' Italia (1832);" both by Professor Rossetti of King's College.

a century and a half afterwards by Luca and Luigi Pulci. A second piece from the same class, the "Buovo d'Antona," a metrical version of which was printed in 1487, existed in one shape or another before 1348, being mentioned by Giovanni Villani, who died in that year. Among the tales of the second cycle, celebrating the Round Table of King Arthur, four prose translations of the Lancelot of Christian de Troyes are found in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, and are supposed to have been written between 1320 and 1340. The prose "Life of Merlin" was stated, in its first edition, to have been translated from the French in 1379; and we observe from Dante's poem a general acquaintance with the tales of Tristram and the other British knights. The third cycle, that of Amadis of Gaul, is not traced in Italy till the fifteenth century. In the next age we shall see the old prose romances reappearing in a metrical form.*

Passing over the Tuscan poets, Francesco da Barberino and Cino da Pistoia, the latter of whom was yet more famous as a civilian, we reach the names of two men who guided the taste of Italy both during their own time and in all succeeding ages. Francesco Petrarca (1304—1374) was a native of Arezzo: Giovanni Boccaccio (1313—1375) was born in Paris, but of Italian parents, and was transported to Florence in his infancy. The high excellence of these great men, as original writers in their own language, forms their smallest claim to the gratitude of posterity. They were the true restorers of ancient learning in Christendom; for their zeal and diligence not only recovered many lost works, and introduced method and philosophy into Latin literature, but even diffused through Italy (for a time at least) the study of the Greek tongue. This, it will be observed, happened more than a hundred years before the fall of Constantinople, which is the earliest epoch of Grecian learning

* On this subject consult, besides Ginguené, Ferrario's Storia ed Analisi degli Antichi Romanzi e dei Poemi Romanzeschi d' Italia: Milano, 1828, 4 tom.

in the rest of Europe. Petrarch was the captain in this crusade against ignorance, and Boccaccio, his affectionate admirer, who had burned his own Italian verses on reading those of his friend, cordially co-operated with him. The charm of a newly-formed acquaintance with so many relics of antiquity, blinded both of them to the importance of their own language; but, nevertheless, they rank amongst the most effectual improvers whom the modern tongue has possessed.

The most celebrated event of Petrarch's life, and that which gave subject and tone to his poetry, was his attachment to Laura, the wife of a citizen of Avignon; an attachment which, if we are to believe evidence that seems quite satisfactory, sought for no unworthy return, consoled itself with fond recollections in the solitudes of Vaucluse, and, when its object died, continued to consecrate to her memory those verses that had in her lifetime been its only mode of expression. The moralist must approve with double warmth the purity of this feeling, when he knows that it was cherished in the midst of a dissolute court; and if the cold worldling smiles in scorn, he must be reminded that Petrarch was no listless dreamer, but passed from his thoughts of love to intense and successful study, and thence into the loudest turmoil of active life. Avignon, with its neighbourhood, the domain of the popes, was long his favourite dwelling-place; but he travelled in several countries of Europe, as an inquirer, or as the commissioner of princes; and, after more than one visit to Italy, he at last settled in the village of Arquà, among the lovely Euganean hills near Padua, and there died and was buried.

The collection of Petrarch's works is voluminous, and most of them are in Latin. They include Ethical Treatises, imitating those of Cicero, whom the poet admired with reverence;—an unfinished History of Ancient Rome, which was a cherished theme with him, and was also one in which his knowledge, though confused and fragmentary, was far more extensive than that of any who had preceded him;—and an epic poem called

Africa, which in language is based on Virgil, but, in its relation of facts taken from the life of the great Scipio, bears a nearer resemblance to Lucan. On this work, which has sunk long ago into utter neglect, rested his contemporary fame as a poet; and it is interesting to know, that his coronation in the Capitol of Rome in 1341, the revival of an ancient solemnity prompted by himself, was an honour conferred, not on the Italian lyrist, but on the restorer of the classical hexameters. These are not all his Latin works; and his Latin epistles in particular possess great historical value.

His "Rime," or verses in the modern language, are chiefly devoted to the history and feelings of his unrequited attachment. Besides the six poems called "Triumphs," they form a series in two parts, one of which was written before Laura's death and the other after. They are of two kinds,—the Sonnets, which amount to more than three hundred, and the Canzoni, and compositions of a similar class, which are much less numerous. Even those who are repelled by the false wit, the constant ringing of changes on words and abstract ideas, and the want of action, which run through all these writings, must feel profoundly the force of their moral purity; and it requires but a little training to enable us to discover and delight in their exquisite delicacy of conception, as well as in that fine poetic fancy which, luxuriating amidst the beauty of natural scenery, groups its features in picturesque combinations with the object of the minstrel's love. The merits of Petrarch as a master of language and versification are extolled beyond measure by his countrymen, who are more competent judges than foreigners should pretend to be. The Italians give the highest place among his love-poems to the three canzoni on Laura's Eyes, which they name the Three Graces.*

Poverty had made Petrarch an ecclesiastic in his youth;

* Canzone 8, "Perchè la vita è breve:" Canzone 9, "Gentil mia donna, io veggio:" Canzone 10, "Poiché per mio destino."—(Parte i. p. 130-132; Ed. Buttura, 1833.)

a conscience troubled by early debaucheries, and sharpened by a supposed vision from heaven, made Boccaccio also an ecclesiastic in more advanced life.* Among the Latin works of the latter, his Genealogy of the Gods, and his Treatise on Ancient Geography, had a fame which their utility at the time well merited ; and, though they became antiquated in the course of the next century, they are still curious as specimens of the ill-assorted knowledge which then prevailed. His other works in the same language are the following :—an essay on the Calamities of Celebrated Persons, from Adam to his own time ; a book on Celebrated Women, beginning with Eve, and ending with Joanna of Naples; and sixteen Eclogues, allegorically shadowing forth contemporary characters and events.

But his Italian writings form the tenure by which he holds his fame ; and among these the Decameron has eclipsed the glory of all the rest. This famous work is a collection of one hundred tales, connected in a way already borrowed from the East by the writers of the French fabliaux, to whom, in many other respects, Boccaccio was much indebted. A party of seven Florentine ladies meet in the church of Santa Maria Novella, during the plague of 1348, and resolve on retreating to some secluded spot in the country with three young men, who are lovers of three of their number. In their retirement, which lasts ten days, each person tells a story daily. The frame-work thus set round the narratives is extremely beautiful in all its details, from the vigorous description of the plague to the romantic landscapes and gay gallantry of the scenes in the Fiesolan villa. The execution of many of the novels is equally fine ; and the grace, feeling, and invention of the writer, with his unrivalled felicity of style, make his best stories gems of art. Nothing can deserve better the name of perfect,

* The details of this monkish adventure, whose supernatural reality, believed by Boccaccio himself, was civilly denied by his correspondent Petrarch, will be found in Ginguené, tome iii. chap. xv. ; or in Dobson's Life of Petrarch, vol. ii. p. 413-420.

than the Griselda, the Nathan, the pathetic tale of Salvestra, or that of the Falcon. Several others, in altered shapes, have found their way into our own language; as, for instance, the adventures of Giletta of Narbonne, transferred to Shakspeare's All's Well that Ends Well, more than one tale in Chaucer, and in Dryden the Tancred, the Honoria, and the Cimon and Iphigenia. The licentiousness of many of the pieces disgraces the work, the author, and still more deeply the times in which he lived. His other Italian works are little known. The "Teseide," a poem in ottava rima, a measure of which he is believed to have been the inventor, relates, in twelve books, the story which, founded originally on Statius, is told in Chaucer's Palamon and Arcite. The poem called the "Filostrato," written in the same stanza, is a version of the tale of Troilus and Cressida. The "Filocopo," the author's earliest prose romance, narrates, from the French fabliaux, the adventures of Florio and Blanchefleur.* The "Fiammetta" has been supposed to record, with poetical embellishments, the novelist's own amours with Maria, a natural daughter of King Robert of Naples.

Boccaccio had benefited by an example of Italian fictions, chiefly taken from the same source as his own, in the "Cento Novelle Antiche," a quaint collection which is still extant. His age produced two good imitators among the Florentines; — Francesco Sacchetti, whose two hundred and fifty-eight tales have much of Boccaccio's style, with not a little of his looseness;—and a certain Ser Giovanni, whose work, called the Pecorone, is greatly duller, but considerably more moral.

After Dino Compagni, whose curious chronicle of Florence embraces the years from 1270 to 1312, the fair city had a series of three useful historians in one family. Giovanni Villani, who was cut off by the plague of 1348, and is the best writer of the three, brought down his history, in twelve books, from the foundation of the

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* See Le Grand D'Aussy, Fabliaux et Contes, tome i. p. 254-278.

city till the year of his death. His work was continued by his brother Matteo to the year 1363, when he also died, leaving the eleventh book of the continuation to be completed by his own son Filippo.

THIRD PERIOD.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

On leaving the greatness and originality which inspire the literature of the fourteenth century, it is excusable to look with lassitude on the age that follows. It was an important era for Italian letters; but its value lay in what it learned, not in what it did. It resembled a fire which, when new fuel has been heaped upon it, smoulders for a time before it blazes out. The study of Latin authors continued; Greek learning came into general use, especially after the capture of Constantinople in 1453, and the consequent dispersion of the Eastern scholars. The diffusion of every sort of knowledge had soon an irresistible engine given to it, in the invention of printing; an art which, first practised in Italy in 1465, at the Sabine monastery of Subiaco, by two Germans, was thence transferred to Rome, Milan, and Venice, and, in the course of a single generation, prepared the way for a new development of intellect in the whole Italian race. Before 1501, there were presses in more than fifty towns of Italy, and in the five principal cities alone, 5000 books had been printed; in Venice (where Aldus had settled in 1488), 2835; in Rome, 925; in Milan, 629; in Florence, 300; and in Bologna, 298.* Still, however, we find no works of independent strength either in science or literature; and the poetry and philosophy which, at the close of the middle ages, aided the arts in adorning the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent, possessed more elegance than vigour, and owed their chief value to the influence they exerted on the succeeding era.

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* Hallam's Literature of the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries, vol. i. p. 336; 1837.

Throughout the first half of the century, the great patrons of letters were, successively, Cosmo de' Medici, and the accomplished Thomas of Sarzana, pope by the title of Nicholas V. Around the former were assembled a crowd of learned men, the most active of whom was Poggio Bracciolini (1381—1459); and notice is also deserved by Leonardo Bruni, called Arctino from his birthplace,—by Chrysoloras, a Greek, who taught in Italy from 1395,—and by his pupils and followers, Guarino Guarini of Verona, Giovanni Aurispa a Sicilian, the irritable Francesco Filelfo of Tolentino, and the equally fierce scholar Laurentius Valla a Roman.

The vernacular literature presented during the same period one interesting phenomenon,—the first appearance of the metrical romances of chivalry. There exists a chain of these, commencing at the very opening of this century, or perhaps even earlier, and running uninterruptedly down to its close. They begin as the compositions of wandering minstrels, recited for bread; and all of them bear evidence of this humble purpose, in the poet's abrupt terminations of cantos, his express petitions for charity, his mixture of coarse jocularity with seriousness, and with quotations from the church-service or from the Vulgate. They next pass into the hands of literary men, and even females, who introduce these street-ballads at court; but, though they become the fashionable form of poetry, they retain, as if by way of piquant contrast, all the peculiarities which had been natural to them in their ruder state. There is merit in one or two of the romances before Pulci and Boiardo, but it is a small merit; and, unless we are sure that any of the productions we now read are the earliest of the class, and the genuine effusions of improvising Italian Homers, we must feel angry that the land which had but recently lost Petrarch and Boccaccio, could give birth to nothing better. One of these romances which is still extant, the Reali di Francia, is in prose, and may belong to the fourteenth century; all the rest are in verse. Their subjects are taken either from the cycle

of Charlemagne (whose pedigree they trace up to Constantine), or from the still more fascinating one of our British Arthur. In the former series, besides the Reali, we find Guerino il Meschino, La Regina Ancroja, and Buovo d'Antona, all printed before 1500. Of the other class surviving examples are rarer, but include "The Life of Merlin with his Prophecies," and two versified fragments, still in manuscript, and bearing the date of 1430, upon the Death of Sir Tristram and Lancelot's Vengeance.*

We now reach the times of Lorenzo de' Medici (1448—1492), himself both a poet and the patron of poets; and it is in the lighter forms of literature that we find his court chiefly to shine. Philosophy was indeed liberally patronised; but we are not tempted to linger in the groves of his Platonic Academy with its leader Marsilius Ficinus and his Grecian teachers, nor with the high-born and all-accomplished Pico di Mirandola, the marvel of his age. The profoundest learning and the most graceful fancy of the day were united in the person of the Tuscan Angelo Poliziano (1454—1494), whose reputation is now less effectually preserved by his mass of philological treatises and classical translations, than by the fragment of a youthful poem, La Giostra, intended to celebrate a tournament in which the prize was gained by the unfortunate Giuliano de' Medici. The fable of this beautiful and harmonious composition is the conquest of the youth by Love, whose visit to his mother at her mountain-palace in the gardens of the Cyprian Isle, reminds us at once of Claudian, who was before Politian, and of Ariosto and Tasso, who came after him.† This writer may have ascribed to him the honour of restoring the

* Analyses of two of these curious old romances will be found in Ginguené (tome iv. chap. 4), and of the rest in Ferrario's work, already cited (tom. iii).

† Neither Sismondi nor Ginguené thinks it worth while to mention Politian's palpable and close imitation of Claudian's Epithalamium of Honorius, which is a pity, since both of them roundly charge the later poets with borrowing from Politian.

Italian language to the vigour and expressiveness of the *trecento;* unless indeed the priority is contested with him by his patron himself. Lorenzo's love-poems to a lady whom he never loved, elegant, fanciful, and refined, are less pleasing than his allegory of the Ambra; while this work again is surpassed by his delightful rustic piece La Nencia da Barberino, his Canti Carnascialeschi, or carnival-songs, and his Sacred Hymns. But all of them are wonderful productions for a busy and skilful statesman. His Mystery of the saints John and Paul, the eunuchs of Constantine's daughter, is too curious not to be named;* and Politian's Favola d'Orfeo, a pastoral play, with lyrics set to music, which was performed in 1483, was an important step in the dramatic art.

The only other unforgotten names of that poetical constellation which shone upon Italy in Lorenzo's time, are those of Luigi Pulci, a Florentine (1431—1487), and Matteo Maria Boiardo, count of Scandiano (1430—1494), who belonged to the court of Ferrara. Both devoted themselves to the chivalrous themes; and, though neither of their poems is much read, Boiardo's indeed never, they are considered with justice as having been the first to prove that the class of subjects they chose was capable of being elevated into the rank of the epic. Pulci's work, the Morgante Maggiore, published in 1485, derives its name from a huge giant, conquered and led about as a slave by Orlando, Charlemagne's renowned nephew, who is the real hero of the piece. At the opening of the story, the paladin is driven from his uncle's court by the plots of the traitor Ganelon, of Maganza or Mayence. After a string of unconnected exploits and adventures, in which appear by turns all the Frankish chivalry, we are conducted to the fatal field of Roncesvalles, where Orlando, betrayed and mortally wounded, blows his terrible horn, confesses himself

* Consult Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, for a full account and specimens of his works. The Mystery is analyzed in Walker's Essay on the Revival of the Drama in Italy, 1805; sect. iv. p. 84-96.

to Archbishop Turpin, and dies upon the cross of his sword. The poem contains all those odd mixtures of the common with the sacred, and all that affectation of the ballad-style, which we have noticed as genuine in the older romances; but Pulci's alternation of solemnity with broad merriment goes greatly farther, and colours the whole work so highly, as to make the perusal of it a positive trial of temper. Stumbling from Latin prayers to indecent buffoonery, from glimpses of serious imagination to groups of burlesque caricatures, we are at a loss to discover any key to the intention of the writer, and, instead of thinking Ariosto extravagant, turn for relief to his poetically harmonized inventions.

Boiardo's Orlando Innamorato, which relates the hero's falling in love with the beautiful Angelica, was soon considered so rude in style and details, that it was modernized, as we shall see, by Berni, but not till it had been chosen by Ariosto as the root on which to ingraft his famous poem. For the Orlando Furioso is merely a continuation of Boiardo's work, which has this as its chief title to notice. Yet, coarse as it may be, it seems to exhibit much less than its forerunner of that reckless mixture of seriousness with mirth; and it also possesses much more invention and force not only in its incidents but in its other features. Several personages afterwards adopted by Ariosto are presented by Boiardo for the first time; and the monotony of characters which reigned in the preceding romances is by him boldly broken up.

CHAPTER V.

Italian Art in the Middle Ages.

A. D. 1000—A. D. 1500.

ARCHITECTURE—*The Byzantine Style*—Saint Mark's—*The Pisan Style*—Monuments in Tuscany—*The Norman Style*—Remains in Sicily—*The Italian Gothic*—Cathedrals—The Doge's Palace—*Florentine Architecture*—Fortified Palaces—Arnolfo—Orcagna—Brunelleschi—Ecclesiastical Buildings—Santa Croce—Santa Maria Novella—Giotto's Belfry—The Cathedral—SCULPTURE—Nicholas of Pisa—The Cosmati—*The Fourteenth Century*—Andrea—Orcagna—*The Fifteenth Century*—Splendour of Florence—Ghiberti's Doors of the Baptistery—Donatello's Works—His Pupils—Verocchio—The Certosa of Pavia—PAINTING—Revival in Tuscany—The Byzantine Style—Remains of Cimabue—Of Giotto—*The Campo Santo of Pisa*—Its Paintings of the Fourteenth Century—Giotto—Simone—Buffalmacco—Antonio—Orcagna's Great Pieces—Laurati—Spinello—Other Artists—*The Fifteenth Century—The Tuscans from* 1400 *to* 1470—Masaccio's Works—Fra Angelico's Life and Paintings—Gozzoli—Fra Filippo's Adventures—*The Florentine School after* 1470—Diversified Character—Botticelli—Signorelli and Others—The Sistine Chapel—Leonardo Da Vinci—His Services to Art—His Works—*The Umbrian School*—Pietro Perugino—His Scholars—Raffaelle—Pinturicchio—Francia—*The Venetian School*—Squarcione—Mantegna's Triumph of Cæsar—Oil-painting introduced—Giovanni Bellini—Carpaccio—Character of Venetian Art fixed.

ARCHITECTURE.

THE point to which we have here to trace the art, is the formation of the modern Italian style, which was mainly evolved before the end of the fifteenth century. In the succeeding times, we shall discover a unity of principle pervading all architectural works; but till the close of the middle ages, that unity is entirely wanting. The

architects were occupied in seeking unsuccessfully for a theory of art; and their innumerable edifices display a chaotic confusion of manner.

Nevertheless, the leading characteristics of the several ages may be brought into view with sufficient clearness, if we assume five divisions, which succeed each other nearly in chronological order. The first, usually described as the Byzantine style, is exemplified in the cathedral of S. Mark at Venice. The second, bearing some resemblance to the former, and referred by some antiquaries to the same source, originated very little if at all later, but was both more lasting and more widely diffused, especially in Tuscany and Lombardy. It is best represented by the cathedral and baptistery of Pisa. The third style is that of the Normans in Sicily, which passed away without exerting any permanent influence. The fourth is the Italian Gothic, instanced in numberless churches and monasteries, the cathedral of Milan being the most celebrated. Last comes the Florentine architecture, the most interesting member of the series, which however does not form one style, but a succession of styles, all marked by boldly original features, yet borrowing from every form that had preceded, till it reaches its perfect development under Brunelleschi.

The magnificent Minster of Venice, which is imitated nowhere except in the church of Sant' Antonio at Padua, is a most striking edifice, but highly anomalous and irregular. This huge pile is still the principal object in the Grand Piazza, the most picturesque architectural scene in Europe. The stranger's eye is dazzled by the oriental air of its clustered cupolas rising like minarets, and by its gorgeous front, fretted and coloured, shining with variegated marbles, and with rich mosaics on a gilded ground. In the interior, the wide fields of gold, on which stand out strange groups and scenery in mosaic, unite with a profusion of architectural decoration to form a companion to the external picture; and the witchery exercised by historical and poetical recollections completes the over-

powering effect. We do not for a time discover that the general form of the church is clumsy in the extreme, that the gaudy ornaments are rude, tasteless, and ill-applied, that the whole structure is a jumble of inconsistent styles, and that the façade is positively ugly. The date of the foundation is not well ascertained; but the shell of the building was completed about 1071; and in its original state, it must have differed little from the old basilican form, except in its roof, which is vaulted. The cupolas, which are said to have been imitated from those of Santa Sophia at Constantinople, disguised the design; and their oriental aspect was made yet more striking by the Saracenic style of the lower facings added to the front, which consist of clustered columns with round-headed doors and arches, and are surmounted by a second story, covered with an ill-invented Gothic fretwork. This upper part, with many of the architectural devices elsewhere, cannot have been added till the close of the thirteenth century at the earliest; and the cathedral was not completed till the first half of the fifteenth.*

The beautiful edifices which stand in the grass-grown piazza of Pisa evince much finer taste. The Pisans are said, like the Venetians, to have borrowed their architecture from the East; but, in their principal monuments, it is not easy to discover any resemblance either to the Mohammedan mosque or to the minster of S. Mark, except in the use of the cupolas, and in the number of ornamental columns. Indeed the chief distinction of the Pisan style is the use it makes of colonnades, which it piles one above another, each row supporting arches. The Cathedral was founded in 1063, when the republic was in the zenith of its glory; and the innumerable columns which adorn this and the other buildings are said to have been the plunder of the East during the crusades.† The ground-

* Chief dimensions in English feet: Width of front, 170; height of front, 72; length of nave, 245; length of transept, 201; internal height of middle dome, 90.

† Niebuhr, however, has an entirely new theory.—"The cathedral

plan presents five naves crossed by a transept and ending in a round tribune: the middle nave, which is the most lofty, is flat-roofed as in the basilicæ; and its covering beams rest upon a high wall, supported on the upper of two arcades surmounting columns. The side aisles are vaulted; and over the transept are cupolas. The exterior displays every where the successive lines of arches rising from columns or pilasters; and the church contains 450 columns in all.* The Baptistery, a circular structure covered with a heavy dome, was begun in 1153; and its external decorations are of the same character, though parts of them, certainly of later date, run into the Gothic style. The famous Leaning Tower, which, with the more modern Campo Santo, completes the group of buildings in this celebrated nook, was founded in 1174, and is a plain cylinder, surrounded by six stories of columned arcades. It would be undeserving of the attention it receives, were it not for the accidental sinking to which it owes its perilous declination.†

Elsewhere in Italy there are many specimens of this Pisan style, of which the most numerous to be found in one spot, are some ancient churches at Lucca.

We next arrive at the architecture of the Normans in Sicily.‡

The northern conquerors of that island found its Byzantine churches transformed into mosques, above which soared minarets crowned with spherical cupolas; while

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of Pisa has undoubtedly obtained its most beautiful materials *from Rome*. In particular, it is scarcely possible that any other quarter can have furnished the noble colossal columns worked with spirals and foliage; and I consider it no paradoxical conjecture, that the city, so faithful to the emperors, has received these columns out of the very palace of the Cæsars." Beschreibung der Stadt Rom, vol. i. p. 120.

* Length, 297 feet; breadth of nave, 108; length of transept, 228; height of front, 127.

† Height, 171 feet; diameter, 28; inclination outwards, 14: Morrona, Pisa Illustrata, tom. i. p. 410: (2d. Ed. 1812).

‡ See Knight's Normans in Sicily, 1838; and its volume of Illustrative Plates.

the gardens of the Moorish Emirs surrounded massive castles, inscribed with sentences from the Koran, and having their gates and vaulted halls adorned with the usual fantastic arches. In the earlier times, these resembled horse-shoes, but they afterwards assumed more commonly the pointed shape, differing indeed in nothing but the style of ornament and the form of the supporting pillars from the later Gothic arch. Of such Saracenic ruins the best examples are near Palermo ;—in the singular villa called La Ziza, in another pile named La Cuba, with its curious pavilion, and in the still more imposing palace of La Favara.

In Normandy there then flourished an architectural school very unlike this; for to that time belong the churches of William the Conqueror, at Caen and elsewhere, which are the finest specimens of the rounded Norman style in its purest age. But the pilgrims who took up their rest in Apulia were a mere handful of soldiers; and few except military men or ecclesiastics joined them after their conquests were secured. Accordingly, after one or two attempts in Calabria and the eastern parts of Sicily, in which appear some features of their national manner of building, they abandoned the art to their new subjects, or to artists from the Greek provinces. The original architecture of the Normans never obtained a hold in their southern kingdom; and the style which prevailed there, particularly in the island, from the middle of the eleventh century till the end of the fourteenth, had the pointed arch for its distinguishing characteristic, and in all essentials was precisely the same with the Saracenic manner previously introduced. It was in some sort an anticipation of that fine and original style which, misnamed Gothic, did not appear in its strength on the continent of Europe till a century and a half after the conquest of Lower Italy by the French knights. But the anticipation was of the form rather than the spirit; the details were borrowed indifferently from the Roman, the Grecian, and the Norman; the projecting mouldings, the tracery, and the mullions of the northern

Gothic, were altogether wanting; and the buildings nowhere rose with the majesty of the Germanic minsters.

Specimens of the Norman architecture are numerous every where in Sicily; and Palermo with its neighbourhood furnishes monuments of all its ages, beginning with San Giovanni de' Leprosi, exhibiting next the beautiful Palatine Chapel of the Palazzo Reale, and ending with the massy piles of the Ospedale Grande and Palazzo de' Tribunali. But the most splendid of all the structures then erected in the island is the cathedral of Monreale, a work belonging to the middle of the twelfth century, and especially gorgeous in its internal decorations.

We cannot, with any plausibility, infer an historical connexion between the peculiarities of those Sicilian edifices, and the Gothic manner which we are next to discover. But it is not at all necessary to enter on the question as to the origin of this style, since, wherever it may have had its birth, it was at all events an exotic in Italy. Solitary examples of the pointed arch may be discovered in various Italian buildings that have survived from the later centuries of the dark ages, the earliest perhaps being some parts of the monastery of Subiaco; but the systematic application of this feature within the Alps dates from the same time as in the rest of Europe, that is, about the beginning of the thirteenth century; and the immediate causes which brought the Gothic style southward, were, unquestionably, the connexion of the peninsula with Germany, and the introduction of the lodges of freemasons.

The modern Italian writers are unanimous in denouncing the Gothic as an abortion in art, a barbarism devised by tasteless barbarians. The censure is in fact not ill deserved by those edifices in their country to which the name of that style is given; for they are, one and all, most faulty specimens of the class. Though generated from a corruption of the classical, the genuine Gothic developed itself beyond the Alps into a system governed by principles diametrically opposed to those of the antique.

In the classical orders, the entablature overpowered the columns, the roof was flat, and the whole ran into horizontal lines. In the new style, the structure shot upwards in perpendicular lines, differing from the classical as a wood of poplars does from one composed of the flat-topped pine ; and to this tendency every feature of the Gothic architecture contributed. But the Italians, while they adopted the pointed arch and the corresponding manner of decoration, never understood the principle of the architecture in which these peculiarities occurred. They would not consent to give up the simple colonnades, or the horizontal entablature ; and they failed utterly in imitating the foreign style, because they attempted to unite its forms with these and similar ancient principles.

This misapprehension is strikingly evinced in the elevation of the Cathedral at Milan, which, not completed till the reign of Napoleon, and heaped with ornament, much of which belongs to the sixteenth century, was founded in 1385, and consecrated in 1418. As a picture nothing can be more beautiful than this fine marble pile, with its high buttresses, its airy pinnacles, its four thousand statues, and the singular elegance of many details. With the Grecian windows of its eastern front, the middle ages are not chargeable ; but the spire does belong to those times.* Probably the best of all the Gothic exteriors is that of the grand cathedral at Orvieto, which dates from 1290 ; and the façade of the cathedral of Siena, carried on from 1089 to 1350, is almost equally fine. The little church of the Spina in Pisa is a beautiful cluster of Gothic ornament. The Gothic buildings of Venice are at once the most picturesque and the most anomalous in Italy : and there are interesting ecclesiastical ruins of the style in all corners of the country, even the most obscure ; as, for instance, in the Abruzzese town of Aquila, and in the romantically situated convent

* Internal length, 493 feet; length of transept, 283; width of nave, 177; height of nave, 151; height from pavement to summit of spire, 356.

of Fossanuova on the edge of the Pontine Marshes, which witnessed the death of Thomas Aquinas.

The Italian architecture of the middle ages reached its highest stage of cultivation at Florence, during the latter half of the fifteenth century; but we can trace its history in that quarter for two hundred years before that time.*

The civil architecture of the fair city is even more interesting than its ecclesiastical. The task of its earliest masters in the art, was that of planning for the fierce nobility such houses as, being placed within the walls and surrounded by streets, should not only accommodate the baron and his retainers, but be defensible against the commonalty. Beauty and comfort were alike subordinate ends; and a style was formed which, borrowing occasional details from every one that had preceded, yet differs in essentials from all. The ancient Florentine mansion is usually a large rectangular pile surrounding an internal court; and its long and lofty front, built of rough-hewn square stones, is unrelieved by columns. Round the base runs a low seat of masonry, and a huge projecting cornice crowns the summit; while the lower story, rising twenty or thirty feet from the ground, has either no windows to the outside, or grated ones placed as high as possible. The upper part of the front is unbroken, except by the arched windows of the principal and third stories, and by a plain band separating these floors.

The oldest architect, whose works still present themselves in Florence, was Arnolfo, erroneously called the son of Lapo. He lived from about 1232 till 1300, and his monuments tend, more than any others, to give to the ancient quarters of the town their air of gloomy grandeur. His greatest achievement was the palace built in 1298 for the Signoria, which now forms, under the name of the Palazzo Vecchio, one of the most re-

* On Florentine architecture, see Bell's Observations on Italy.

markable objects in the city. Its plan corresponds with the general account already given, but the imposing effect of its stupendous mass cannot be conceived from description; and its irregularity of shape, and the preservation of the rude tower which rises to a dizzy height from its summit, were both caused by the whim of the people. The palace formerly occupied by the Podestà, and now as one of the public prisons, is an equally bold design of the same artist; and to him belongs also the original plan of the structure called the Tower of Orsanmichele, which passes more into the Gothic than Arnolfo's other works, and is better in design and proportion than any of them.

Close to the Palazzo Vecchio stands the superb Loggia de' Lanzi, a covered gallery of three arches, uniting, in fine proportions and original effect, some of the Greek details with the essential forms of the Gothic. It was built about 1355 by the Florentine architect, sculptor, and painter, Andrea di Cione, commonly called Orcagna, (1329—1389), and is our best specimen of civil architecture in the city from that age. The first half of the fifteenth century gives us the large and splendid palace called that of the Riccardi, which was erected in 1430 by Michelozzo Michelozzi for Cosmo de' Medici, and was inhabited by this celebrated family for more than a century. This mansion, as well as that of the Strozzi by Simone Pollajuolo, called Il Cronaca, successfully attempts to unite with security and strength some degree of architectural beauty. The modern residence of the Grand Dukes is the immense Pitti Palace, planned by Brunelleschi about 1440 for Luca Pitti, and sold to the Medici in 1549. The external front, which alone is Brunelleschi's, is heavy, and yet imposing.

During those centuries, the ecclesiastical architecture of Florence had differed considerably from the character of the secular buildings, even while it was practised by the same masters; though it was so far influenced by the other class, that it always possessed less of the Gothic style than did the art in other cities of Italy. Our

earliest example of the plain Gothic is Arnolfo's famous church of Santa Croce. The exterior, like every other church-front in the city, excepting three or four, is still a bare brick-wall; and the interior has undergone modern improvements, which have left little of the original aspect beyond the general gloom (half dispelled by long narrow windows high in the side-walls), and the acutely pointed arches resting on octagonal pilasters. The historical interest which this edifice receives from the tombs of Galileo, Machiavelli, Michel Angelo, and Alfieri, is shared by the Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella. The cloisters attached to the latter contained the prisons of the Inquisition, and the introduction of Boccaccio's Decameron has its scene laid in the church itself. Its foundation belongs to a date nearly the same with that of Santa Croce, but its architects were more obscure, and its completion was long delayed. The façade is mixed and unpleasing; but the beauty of the Gothic nave is not destroyed even by the incongruous style of ornament adopted in Vasari's restorations, and its cloisters possess some pointed arcades which are scarcely less noble.

Beside the Florentine Cathedral-church of Santa Maria del Fiore, we may notice its beautiful Campanile or Belfry, completed about 1334, from a design of the painter Giotto. The minster itself was founded in 1298; but it was incomplete in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and its principal front is at this day a flat brick-wall plastered and painted. It was planned by Arnolfo; about 1332 it was carried on by Giotto, afterwards by his pupil Taddeo Gaddi, and by Andrea Orcagna; and in 1417 the work was committed to the celebrated Filippo Brunelleschi (1377—1444). It is impossible to assign to each of these architects, and their coadjutors, his respective share in the structure; but to Brunelleschi belongs the erection of the great cupola, which was the first undertaking of the kind ever executed in Europe on such a scale, and is by far the best feature of the building. The exterior derives an odd

aspect from the marbles of different colours, which cover it in pannels and fanciful figures, a style frequent in old Tuscan churches: it has no columns, only pilasters and cornices, and three projecting tribunes at the chancel-end form it into a Latin cross. The effect of the exterior is heavy, but grand; and the dome, which rises above it, supported on an octagonal drum, is overpowering from its vastness. The interior, in which low piers support the wide arches of the nave, is plain, gloomy, and undecided in character; but the lofty octagonal vault of the dome forms from within, with the massive walls on which it rests, a very impressive whole.*

The greatness of Brunelleschi's genius is exhibited by his cupola; but the characteristics of his ecclesiastical style must be sought in his other works, of which Florence possesses two admired ones, the churches of San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito. The plans resemble each other. They are essentially those of basilican churches, and the elevations are on the same model; but the design of Santo Spirito has this original feature, that the colonnaded arcades of the interior are continued all the way round the transept and tribune.† Both edifices, though they have been severely criticised, are pleasing as well as chaste, and betoken distinctly the revival of the classical style.

The school of Florentine architects, which succeeded Brunelleschi, imitated him with success. Michelozzi, who has been already named, executed some fine palaces in Tuscany. Alberti, who also flourished about the middle of the fifteenth century, was a profound student of classical architecture, on which he composed a treatise; and his works are numerous in Italy, including at Florence the beautiful tribune in the church of the

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* Height of nave, 139 feet; internal height of dome, 262; from pavement to summit of lantern and cross of dome, 463; length of interior, 491; of transept, 294; breadth of nave and aisles, 132; width of dome at its spring, from side to side, 138, or, from angle to angle, 149.

† Its plan is represented in a plate of our first volume, at p. 187.

Annunziata. Meanwhile the Tuscan Giuliano of Majano had been called to Rome, where he erected the huge Palazzo of S. Mark, the only characteristic specimen of the Florentine civil architecture which now exists in that city. Pintelli, who lived in the same period, carrying thither the improved style, built the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, the famous Sistine Chapel, the bridge of San Sisto, and the church of Sant' Agostino. From the same school issued the great Bramante, whose works in Rome however belong chiefly to the sixteenth century.

SCULPTURE.

We must seek the early specimens of this art in the decorations of the ancient churches, where they appear among the bas-reliefs of the façades, altars, or pulpits, and upon the tombs of the great placed along the aisles. The best existing sculptures of the middle ages are, with few exceptions, to be found in Tuscany, where Pisa and Florence were successively the leading schools. In Rome little was effected till very late ; and, in the north of Italy, the patronage of the princely houses which rose one after another, was unable to produce works that could vie with those of the free Tuscan cities.*

The first approach to excellence was made in Pisa. But the sculptors originally employed, both in that capacity and as architects, in the structures of the Piazza, have left us no such works as could tempt us to much exertion in unravelling the history of Bonanno, Busketus, or Diotisalvi. The oldest name which deserves immortality is that of the Pisan Nicholas, whose earliest certain work, the Arca or Coffin of Saint Dominic, in the church of that saint at Bologna, was executed in his youth, about the year 1225. This artist is said to have deeply studied the few classical sculptures which were collected

* The principal authority is Count Cicognara's splendid work, Storia della Scultura, 3 tom. fol. Venezia, 1813 : checked by the works of Rumohr, Flaxman, and other writers who discuss the theory of the art.

in his native city, and especially the fine sarcophagus of the Countess Beatrice, the mother of the famous Matilda, an antique which was then inserted in the wall of the cathedral, and now stands in the arcade of the Campo Santo.* His works present the hesitating efforts of infant art; but the series of them displays an encouraging progress, and a few have excellent forms, united with a simple beauty of design that atones for the absence of expression. Some groups, even on the urn of Saint Dominic, are excellent for their age; a great improvement, again, is visible in the singular composition representing the Last Judgment, in the cathedral of Orvieto; the reliefs on the reading-desk in the cathedral of Pisa are still better, and those on the pulpit of the Pisan Baptistery are the best of all.† Nicola's son Giovanni embraced the same pursuit, but did not surpass his father in expression, while he was far his inferior in form. According to the usual practice of the middle ages, many persons cultivated at once all the arts of design; and the Florentine Arnolfo has left us the tabernacle of the Roman basilica of San Paolo, a work possessing much beauty for its time, and resembling the manner of Nicola and Giovanni.‡ To the same style, and to the end of the same age, belongs the sculptor Giovanni, the last of a family of Cosmati, who ennobled art in Rome during the whole of the thirteenth century.

Till the end of the period now reviewed, and even for a considerable time subsequently, sculpture possessed neither theory nor practical skill which could enable it to venture farther than the execution of reliefs forming architectural ornaments. In the fourteenth century, such works advanced rapidly in merit. In Venice some

* No. XX. The subject is the story of Hippolytus and Phædra.

† See specimens of his works, and of the older sculptures, in Cicognara: plates illustrating book iii., chapters 2 and 3.

‡ The conflagration of 1823 has scarcely injured the Tabernacle; but it has destroyed the bronze-door which, executed in relief at Constantinople, probably about 1254, presented the materials for a very interesting comparison.

beautiful designs were executed for the doge's palace by the unfortunate architect Calendario, Falier's fellow-conspirator. But Tuscany, which continued to be the favourite seat of the arts, presents us in that age with two very great names ;—Andrea of Pisa, who was the apprentice of Giovanni, and died in 1343 ; and Andrea Orcagna, already mentioned as an architect. Pisan genius was now subservient to the growing splendour of her mistress, and the best works of the former artist are to be sought in Florence. His greatest is the celebrated southern gate of the Baptistery, representing in bronze the history of John the Baptist, and some other reliefs of his may be seen upon Giotto's Campanile. Orcagna's style was as daringly original in sculpture as in architecture ; and in his tabernacle for the chapel in Orsanmichele, there is great and powerful expression, though with a deficiency in elevation and ideality. In this work also we see, for the first time, small statues detached almost wholly from the flat surface of the marble.

Throughout the fifteenth century, Tuscany, decaying like the rest of Italy in political strength, was mighty in every path of art, and in none so great as in sculpture. During all that age, indeed, the defects of this pursuit were in detail only ; for, in spirit and theory, no works of the class, executed before or since, have approached so nearly as those which were then produced, to the perfection of the antique. They exhibit, it is true, general timidity of execution, frequent imperfection of form, and an occasional complexity of composition betokening an inadequate apprehension of the proper province of sculpture ; but, on the other hand,—in calm beauty of expression, in significance of attitude and arrangement, and in that ineffable harmony which solemnizes all high works of art,—the best statues and reliefs of this period are unapproached by any modern efforts. The two great men of the age were Ghiberti and Donatello ; but these artists were surrounded, preceded, and followed, by others of distinguished merit. The catalogue is long,

and the difficulty lies in making choice of the names and works most truly deserving enumeration.

The history of Florentine art in this its age of glory, opens with a celebrated event. The Signoria and the Guilds resolved, that the two doors of the Baptistery yet unfinished should be cast in bronze like that of Andrea, and artists were invited to furnish designs. The list of those who obeyed the summons, contains, besides other names of less note, those of Brunelleschi, Donatello, and Jacopo della Quercia, a sculptor whose works are now to be sought in Siena, Lucca, and Bologna. But the design which was preferred was that of Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378—1442), who, the son and pupil of a goldsmith, and also attached to painting, was then aged twenty-three, and, inspired by the early renown thus gained, devoted twenty years of his life to the honourable task assigned him. His two bronze doors still exist. The reliefs of the northern one represent events from the gospels; those of the eastern, which Michel Angelo pronounced worthy to be the gate of Paradise, portray scenes from the Old Testament, on a field composed of ten large panels divided by richly ornamented borders, which indeed contain some of the finest of the figures. The reliefs that fill the panels exhibit the imperfection of art in several points. The architecture and costumes are Italian, from the artist's own age; the same design embraces several scenes, succeeding each other in the order of time, and repeating the same personages; and the composition, instead of being such as is proper to sculpture, is exactly that of painting, comprehending, not a simple arrangement of figures in a foreground, but a series of groups and landscapes, more or less distant, and seen in perspective. This attempt to overstep the limits of his art, which probably aided in misleading subsequent sculptors, is no more than partially successful even in the hands of Ghiberti; but this and all other defects are forgotten in the ease, grace, and beauty of the figures, the perfection of the grouping, and the classical truth united with liveliness of expression. Few works possess absolutely such

excellence: none executed under such disadvantages has ever come within an immeasurable distance of it. On the first panel, which is perhaps the best, the Creation of Adam stands at one side; the Creation of Eve, whose figure is one of the loveliest ever imagined, occupies the centre; the Temptation lies in the distance; and the piece also contains the Expulsion from Eden, exquisite in grace and feeling. The history of Joseph is little inferior; that of David's victory over the Philistine is singularly animated; and the history of Abraham presents some beautiful groups. The northern gate also offers several pieces possessing very remarkable merit. Ghiberti's other works in Florence are, a relief on the high altar of the cathedral, and the statues of St Stephen, St Matthew, and St John the Baptist, filling at this day three of those fourteen niches of Orsanmichele, in which each of the guilds erected the image of its patron saint, sculptured by the best artists of the fifteenth century.

Donato, commonly called Donatello, executed, during a life of eighty-three years (1383—1466), works deservedly ranked among the most illustrious monuments of Italian sculpture. They are to be found in Rome, Naples, Padua, and Venice, in Florence and several other towns of Tuscany. Among his many reliefs, displaying great variety both in style and merit, the most celebrated are the bronzes on the altar of Sant' Antonio at Padua. His greatest efforts, however, were statues, and these also are numerous. His sense of beauty is certainly inferior to Ghiberti's, but it is still dignified and pure; his execution is admirable; and, if there be any foundation for the charge of a deficiency in individual character, the fault is more than redeemed by the general accuracy and grace of his forms, the repose and fine balancing of his attitudes, and the placid, devotional sentiment which almost every where inspires him. In the niches of Orsanmichele he erected the statues of St Peter, St Mark, and St George; the last of which, a youthful manly figure in half armour, is his best and most elevated work. It is simple, unaffected, graceful, and full of his

own quiet and natural feeling. None of his statues is more accurately true to nature than the portrait-figure of a bald old man, usually called the Zuccone, which is placed in an elevated position on Giotto's belfry. Admirable for its tranquil and yet life-like expression, it well deserves the compliment bestowed by the artist himself, when he said to it "Favella!" (Speak!) In the Baptistery we find a celebrated wooden Crucifix of his, together with an emaciated Magdalen, executed in the same material, original in conception, but not pleasing: and a similar work, a penitential figure of the Baptist, is in the Ducal Gallery of the Ufizj.

Of his pupils the most distinguished were, Michelozzi the architect, Desiderio da Settignano, and a family of Rossellini, the best of whom was Antonio. To the middle and end of the century belong several other excellent sculptors, whose style was more or less influenced by that of Donatello and Ghiberti. Luca della Robbia, noted for his invention of a peculiar mode of finishing compositions in terra cotta, lived till about 1470; and has been lately said to deserve a much higher reputation than he has yet enjoyed.* Mino of Fiesole, who died in 1486, was the sculptor of the St Luke in Orsanmichele; and Antonio Pollajuolo (1426—1498), to whom belongs the altar of the Florentine Baptistery, has been characterized as approaching nearer to the learned anatomy and bold drawing of Buonarroti, than any other artist of his age.† But a greater name is that of Andrea del Verocchio (1432—1488). This irritable and unfortunate man of genius is said to have deserted his first profession of painting, from jealousy of his renowned pupil Leonardo Da Vinci; and Vasari also relates of him, that when, as he lay expiring in an hospital at Venice, an ill-carved crucifix was held to his lips, he implored the attendants to bring him a better, if they did not wish to see him die in despair. His best works in Florence, which display

* Rumohr, vol. ii. p. 287-295.
† Cicognara, lib. iv. cap. 5. tom. ii. p. 122.

uncommon excellence, are, the expressive St Thomas of Orsanmichele, and a Fountain in the court of the Palazzo Vecchio, forming a group representing a beautiful winged boy embracing a dolphin.

The number of Tuscan sculptures produced during the fifteenth century, must not be estimated from the fewness of the examples which have here been given; and the excellence of the monuments would be most imperfectly developed even by the fullest description.

Among the few works of merit executed in the north of Italy during this age, none need be alluded to, except those reliefs which cover the façade of the church of the Certosa near Pavia. These were commenced in 1473; and, if engravings are to be trusted, very few sculptures of the time admit of being compared with them, for skill in attitude, grouping, and expression.*

We now leave the history of sculpture, at the moment when it is about to receive a new direction from the commanding genius of Michel Angelo.

PAINTING.

No chapter in the history of art is so encouraging as that which embraces Italian painting in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. During this era it presents, in its noble spirit struggling against mechanical difficulties, a scene like one that we may view at early dawn among the valleys of the Roman plain, on which the sun rises from behind the mountains into a cloudless sky, shedding a golden radiance on the heights, and transforming into beauty even the pestilential mists which its beams gradually chase from the hollows. The revival of painting followed, after a short interval, one of the great events in religious history, namely, the zeal which was kindled through Italy and Europe by the energetic and mystical Saint Francis of Assisi.

Even from the latest stage of this period there are few paintings, which have not antique rudeness enough

* Cicognara, vol. i. plates 47 and 48.

to repel a taste educated to admire the elaborate finish of modern times; and it must always be recollected, too, that oil painting (which the Flemish brothers Van Eyck invented or made efficient in the beginning of the fifteenth century) was slowly introduced into Italy, and was only becoming general during the years immediately preceding 1500. Most of the pieces now to be mentioned are executed either in distemper, or on plastered walls by the bold operation styled *in fresco*, in which the Italian masters attained an early and unrivalled eminence.*

THE TUSCAN SCHOOL TILL 1400.

It is an undisputed fact, that the revival of painting, like that of sculpture, commenced in Tuscany. It is equally certain, that about the middle of the thirteenth century, or a little later, which is the point at which improvement first manifested itself, the prevailing style was the Byzantine, introduced by Greek artists from Constantinople. But it has not by any means been clearly discerned wherein the peculiarities of that style consisted; and it has been usually assumed that it was a rude and defective manner, which, as the first step in advance, the Italian painters had to discard. Materials are extant which justify a different conclusion, and evince that the introduction of this foreign taste, gross and faulty as it was, truly formed the first stage in improvement.† From the ninth century till the middle of the thirteenth, painting among the Byzantine artists

* There are numerous, or rather innumerable, Italian writers on painting, among whom Vasari for the times extending down to the middle of the sixteenth century, and Lanzi for the whole history of the art till the end of the century before the present, furnish, with some of the historians of particular schools, the chief materials on which the student has to work. But the principles of criticism will be better learned from writers in our own language, the first place belonging to Reynolds and Fuseli, critics equally useful, though most unlike in their opinions as well as in their own genius. Much theory, and much historical matter for the middle ages, have been borrowed in the text from Rumohr's Italienische Forschungen, already cited.

† These hints on Byzantine art are an indication, rather than an exposition, of the masterly theory propounded by Rumohr.

differed from contemporary Italian works in several important particulars. In both quarters art was timidly imitative; but in the eastern empire the models from which it borrowed were more various than in the west, and the execution was usually better; the fashion of the drapery and ornament had a peculiar character of semi-oriental barbarism; and, while in both countries the drawing of the figure was generally bad, the common tendency of the Greeks was to lengthen it disproportionally, and that of the Italians to represent it as short and squab. But the most palpable distinctions were two in the technical treatment. First, in the oldest Italian paintings the vehicle of the colours is transparent, and the tone is therefore light and clear; in the works from Constantinople the tone is dark and yellowish, being produced by the use of some colouring matter which, if modern chemists have rightly analyzed it, was wax.* The second difference was this,—that the Greeks, besides ornamenting their draperies richly with gilding, surrounded their figures with a golden ground; a barbarous practice of which the oldest Italian works exhibit no trace. In those early productions of the thirteenth century, where we can trace the first ameliorations of art, we discover most, or all, of these peculiarities derived from the Greek style; some of them prevailed very long; and the most objectionable, the flaunting ground, was not entirely discarded even in the time of Raffaelle.

The oldest name celebrated in Italian painting is that of Cimabue, who, born about 1240, died in 1300. On the strength of his merit the Florentines claim the glory of having resuscitated art,—a pretension which the school of Siena seems to have some right, in the person of Duccio, to contest with them. The works of Cimabue were Byzantine, in their style, in their colouring, and in their blaze of gold; and the tradition says that he was

* Morrona, Pisa Illustrata, tom. ii. capit. iv. sect. 3.

taught in his youth by Greek artists. He improved, it is true, upon that school; but, though every thing regarding him is obscure, there is no sufficient reason for believing that his improvement consisted in any departure from its principles. To him are commonly assigned some ill-preserved fresco paintings in the church of S. Francis at Assisi, which at all events give an idea of the masters from whom he learned; but his boldness and loftiness of conception are more clearly evinced by two rudely grand figures of Madonnas on wood, both at Florence, the more celebrated of the two in the church of Santa Maria Novella, the other in the Ducal Gallery.

To this great artist succeeds the Florentine Giotto, (1276—1336), whose history and works are somewhat better known. The Italian novelists have preserved anecdotes of his wealth, his ugliness, and his profane wit.* The story which describes him as a shepherd-boy, discovered by Cimabue drawing rude figures on a stone, is perhaps too picturesque to be true; and his undoubted pieces display a marked dissimilarity in spirit to those of his alleged teacher, while they deviate also from the Byzantine style in colouring, if in nothing else, having a clear rosy hue which indicates a return to the older Italian method, though it is also an improvement on it. In the theory of his art, however, Giotto departed essentially from all his predecessors. When we combine the criticisms of the older writers with the few pictures which still can be certainly or probably identified as his, we may describe his characteristics as consisting in an attempt, made under manifold difficulties, but attended with surprising success, to establish, instead of the rude, vague, devotional loftiness of Cimabue, a beauty derived from a closer observation of life, as well as enlivened by a better and less formal expression of ordinary human feeling. His only existing work which is ascertained by a genuine inscription, is one in the church of the

* Boccaccio, Decamerone; Giornata 6; Novella 5.—Sacchetti, Novelle 63, 75.

Santa Croce in Florence, containing five divisions, of which that in the centre represents the Saviour crowning the Virgin. The gallery of the Florentine Accademia delle Arti contains some small compositions of his, representing, in a fashion half religious and half comic, events from the history of Saint Francis. Frescoes in the upper church of that saint at Assisi, assigned to Giotto by some critics, have been pronounced by others to be inferior, and unlike his genuine remains:* but others on the vaulted roof of the subterranean part of the same building are undoubtedly his, and resemble the pieces of the Academy both in execution and in spirit. Other pictures laying claim to his name, occur in various galleries throughout Italy as well as elsewhere.

But the most remarkable monument of Italian painting in the middle ages, is the Campo Santo of Pisa, a cemetery filled with earth brought from the Holy Land, and enclosed by walls, within which is erected a Gothic arcade. The walls were successively painted in fresco by the greatest artists of the fourteenth century, and by one of the fifteenth; besides others who, in those times and afterwards, executed minor parts of the undertaking.

In the fourteenth century, we find, first among the names of those painters, that of Giotto, whose great work in this place, the history of Job, is now an almost undistinguishable ruin. Two compartments of it, the Misfortunes of the Patriarch and his Conversation with his Friends, are the best preserved; and some of their figures, especially those of angels, display a placid grace worthy of the master, and more than worthy of the age. Other paintings of the arcade were executed by two of his contemporaries: Simone of Siena, usually called Memmi (1285—1344), who is immortalized by Petrarch; and the Florentine Buonamico, nicknamed

*Assigned to him by Vasari, (Vita di Giotto), and by Lanzi (Scuola Fiorentina); peremptorily rejected by Rumohr (vol. ii. p. 66).

Buffalmacco (1262—1340), the buffoon of Boccaccio's novels. Simone, decidedly Giotto's inferior in drawing and expression, introduced greater strength into his colouring, and more regularity into his composition. For the Campo he executed in several compartments the history of Saint Ranieri, which has suffered severely and been much restored; to which he added, over one of the doors, an Assumption of the Virgin, a far superior work. He was one of the earliest painters who attempted portraits. Buffalmacco's scenes taken from the Old Testament, and his Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of the Saviour, are better preserved than most frescoes of the arcade; but these, the only known remains of the master, being coarse, unskilful, and caricatured, compel us to believe him less successful in painting Scripture-pieces than in playing on the weakness of Master Andrea and poor Calandrino. About the middle of the century the Campo received works from Antonio Veneziano (1310—1384), who, belonging like the rest to the Florentine school, painted scenes from the history of the favourite saint Ranieri, with an expression and an approach to good drawing that indicated a great advance in art.

He was succeeded by the two brothers Orcagna, of whom notice is deserved by Andrea alone, the distinguished sculptor and architect. His paintings were even more boldly original than his architecture and sculptures. An altar-piece in Santa Maria Novella bears his name inscribed; and his two great frescoes in the Campo Santo are by far the most imposing works of the age. In their subjects, embracing the most awful mysteries of our being,—and in the audacity of imagination and sentiment which breathes throughout the whole,—we have what wants only a few softer touches, to render it a perfect embodiment of the wildly poetical and darkly religious spirit which ruled the middle ages. The cold simplicity of the colouring places these works behind their time; and their deficiency in repose and beauty also belongs to the artist individually; but that imperfect knowledge

of composition, and of perspective both linear and aërial, which is exposed by his boldness in attempting distant landscapes and figures, was a fault common to all his contemporaries. His own genius, aided by his skill in sculpture, gave to the heads of his pictures that true and powerful expression, which was the first good specimen of portraiture and physiognomy; and these advantages also enabled him to attempt the delineation of the nude figure with much freedom and success. One of Andrea Orcagna's pieces (covering half of a compartment, on the other half of which his brother painted the Inferno), represents the Last Judgment, and, though the weaker of the two, is very striking. The saints of the Old and New Testament, with other figures, are ranged on one side; the wicked are on the other: King Solomon rises from his tomb, uncertain to which of the classes he will be allotted; and, in the upper part of the scene, angels hold the instruments of the Passion, the Saviour raises his hand to condemn the sinners, and the Virgin turns lamentingly away.* The second of these great works is called, by the Italians, the Triumph of Death. This composition, unsurpassed for powerful imagination, contains a variety of groups, which there is here no adequate space for describing. The centre is occupied by the personification of Death, a gigantic and hideous monster, clad in iron mail, which hovers in the air, brandishing the scythe over a heap of corpses. The souls of the dead, small naked bodies, issue from their mouths, and are seized by angels, who bear them gladly up to heaven, or by wildly formed demons, who drag them to the place of doom, indicated by the mouths of a volcano. On one side of this mountain of the dead, a group of the miserable among the human race, the blind, the maimed, and the poor, pray to the terrible genius of mortality, in words which the painter has written over

* Those who are acquainted with the works of Michel Angelo, do not require to be reminded, how nearly some points in this description apply to the Last Judgment of that great master.

their heads.* On the other side, towards which the face of the spectre is threateningly turned, is a festive band seated beneath a thicket of orange-trees, with two quivered cupids, and a Provençal troubadour playing on the viol. The females of this company are portraits, and the figure in the middle is Castruccio Castracani. At one point of the distance, a hunting party of nobles are led by a hermit to the dead bodies of three kings, painted in different stages of decay: and near these an expressive group of monks are gathered on a mountain, round the door of a hermitage.

The brothers Orcagna were succeeded by Pietro Laurati, supposed by some to have been the same person as the Sienese Pietro del Lorenzetto, who with his brother Ambrogio sustained the decaying school of their city during the latter part of the fourteenth century. His painting in the Campo Santo represents, with great force of invention and expression, the lives of St Paul the hermit, and other early Anchorets. About the very end of the century, the pictures in the cemetery received the addition of three compartments, now almost entirely destroyed, representing the martyrdom of St Ephesus under Diocletian. These pieces, which were the works of Spinello, called Aretino from his native town Arezzo (1328—1400), are coldly criticised by Vasari. But this artist has been pronounced, by other connoisseurs, to have inherited no mean portion of Orcagna's skill in depicting character; and we still possess from his hand frescoes in the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena, representing scenes from the history of Pope Alexander III., and others in the sacristy of San Miniato a Monte at Florence, which contain incidents from the life of St Benedict. It is related of Spinello, that in another work, the altar-piece of Sant' Angelo at Arezzo (still or lately existing), which represented the Fall of the Rebel Angels, he exerted his imagination so vividly in giving horror to

* Since happiness on earth for us is none,
Come, Death! thou medicmer of mortal wo,
Administer thy dread and final cure!

the figure of Lucifer, that the image haunted his dreams, till it caused insanity and death.*

These older pictures of the Campo Santo embrace most points in the history of Italian, or (which is the same thing) of Tuscan painting throughout the fourteenth century. No names but three require to be added to the list. The earliest and greatest among these is that of Taddeo di Gaddo, who, born in 1300, was the ablest pupil of Giotto, and closely adhered to his technical manner as well as to his peculiar tone of feeling. Tommaso di Stefano, called Giottino (1324—1356), was the grandson of Giotto, and evinced during his short life great skill in drawing, with uncommon talent for expressing character and solemn feeling. In the latter half of this century, we find the neglected name of Giovanni da Melano or Milano, a scholar of Taddeo, who has been lately pronounced superior to any painter of the age, in his drawing, his repose and simplicity of expression, his pleasing execution, and his attempt at giving relief to his figures.†

We thus find that, in the course of the fourteenth century, the Tuscan painters added to their older religious subjects the legends of later saints; that they were thereby led to a more varied manner in their representation both of figures and action; and that the progress of the art, facilitated by that of sculpture, allowed even an approach to physiognomical expression. The artists had begun to study individual nature; and their works exhibit a diversity in the modes of feeling, which, although it perhaps for a time impeded art, was yet a promising omen for its subsequent progress. Early in the next century, painting for the churches, no longer confined to frescoes on the walls or distemper-pieces on the fixed altars, was employed for the first time in

* Vasari, Vite de' Pittori, Architetti, e Scultori; Vita di Spinello Aretino: Edition of Bologna, 1647, vol. i. p. 136.

† Rumohr, vol. ii. p. 83-89. See Vasari, Vita di Taddeo Gaddi, sub finem, vol. i. p. 98.

producing pictures to be hung up along the chapels in the aisles. The rise of the Medici and other wealthy Florentine families, furnished liberal patrons to art; and, though paintings were still hardly to be found anywhere but in ecclesiastical buildings, they became full of portraits and of historical allusions. The pieces of the fifteenth century gradually lost that sameness and repetition, in the character and expression of the heads, from which so few of the older artists had been able to deviate; the human figure began to be drawn with much greater accuracy, though still, in most cases, both timidly and imperfectly; colouring acquired a relief which preceding works had wholly wanted; and composition became more correct as well as bolder, exhibiting an advancing skill both in perspective and in the execution of objects from still-life. The period was one of transition, unsteady and often interrupted; but no step was lost that had once been taken: the earliest of the great painters in the century was Masaccio; the latest was Leonardo Da Vinci.

THE TUSCAN SCHOOL FROM 1400 TO 1470.

For more than fifty years after 1400, the Tuscan school is adequately represented by its four greatest masters, all natives of Florence or its district:—Maso, or Tommaso, nicknamed Masaccio (1401—1443); the friar Giovanni, canonized by the name of Angelico, and usually called Fra Angelico Da Fiesole (1387—1455); the friar Filippo Lippi (1400—1469); and Benozzo Gozzoli (1400—1478). Two of these shared between them the task of remedying the main deficiencies which still embarrassed their art. Masaccio developed the theory of chiaroscuro, of relief, and of composition and arrangement: Fra Angelico devoted himself to investigating, within his own peculiar limits, the principles of physiognomy and expression.

The great Masaccio lived in extreme poverty; and his death, at the age of thirty-two, was suspected of having been produced by poison, administered by jealous

rivals. Time has spared but two of his works; the frescoes in the Roman church of San Clemente, and those of the Brancacci chapel in the church of the Carmine at Florence. The pieces in Rome, which have been much restored, were executed in early life. Besides the Crucifixion, they represent various saints in legendary or imaginary scenes, among which the dispute of St Catherine with the sages of Alexandria has been thought to prove most clearly the rising excellence of the master. The celebrated frescoes of the Carmine embrace, besides paintings of other artists finished by Masaccio, several executed entirely by himself, in which can be traced his gradual emancipation from older models, ending in the complete triumph of his unfettered skill. In this chapel, Leonardo, Michel Angelo, and Raffaelle learned, and gratefully acknowledged that they learned, their highest lessons; and the finest of the works stood unequalled and unapproached, till the time of these more finished painters. The perspective, both aërial and linear, the foreshortening, the knowledge of the human figure, and the firm, serious, natural expression of the heads, left little for modern art to surpass; and the bold relief, the grand simplicity of the draperies, and the rich chiaroscuro, came yet nearer to perfection. Several figures and attitudes, borrowed by Michel Angelo and Raffaelle, are among the points most admired in their best pictures.

Fra Angelico, educated as an illuminator of manuscripts, and inspired from childhood by strong religious feeling, entered the Dominican order in his twentieth year, and spent his long life in the entire consecration of his art to sacred subjects. He refused the archbishopric of Florence, and is said never to have been seen angry. Before beginning to paint, he always occupied some time in prayer; in representing the Crucifixion, he wept bitterly; and, with a fond superstition, characteristic of the man and in harmony with his times, he believed his pencil to be guided by inspiration, and therefore never consented to alter any part of his works. His paintings were pervaded by a tone of sentiment express-

ing profound religious ecstasy :—from the countenances of his saints and angels there breathe a beauty and a bliss which are pathetically moving. Though passion was beyond his reach, yet, strange to tell, this retired and fanciful ascetic exhibits in his heads, many of which were portraits, a deep study of life, and a skill previously unapproached in delineating individual characteristics. Several of his works in fresco remain to us, and numerous others in distemper are scattered over Italy, or were sold into foreign countries after the suppression of the monasteries. Some of the latter class are in the Florentine Gallery of the Ufizj, and others in the collection of the Academy. In Rome, the gallery of the late Cardinal Fesch used to contain an admirable easel-picture of Angelico, representing the Last Judgment; and two smaller ones in the gallery of the Vatican are scenes from the legend of St Nicholas. Of the saint's frescoes in Florence, the most numerous collection is at the Dominican convent of S. Mark; but his best and largest pieces of this kind are those which cover the walls and vault of Nicholas V.'s chapel in the Vatican.

The early works of Gozzoli, to be found at Prato and San Geminiano, in the Florentine territory, are said to establish Vasari's assertion that he was a scholar of Fra Angelico; but his paintings are chiefly scattered, or lost, in these and other obscure places. His frescoes were his best performances; and his greatest effort is that noble series of histories from the Old Testament, which he executed in the Campo Santo of Pisa. In composition, and to some extent in colouring, he profited by the example of Masaccio; in his landscapes, he is that artist's superior; and, though his drawing always remained faulty, his minute observation of life threw into his countenances a natural expression not inferior to Angelico's, united with an energy to which the recluse's gentle and child-like genius was quite unequal. Among his decaying works in the Pisan cemetery, the Drunkenness and Curse of Noah are inimitable for nature and expression; the festive groups in the Marriage of Jacob

and Rachel are most graceful and lively in attitude and drapery; and the feeling which inspires some scenes from the life of Joseph, is no unworthy foretaste of the dramatic power wielded by Raffaelle.

Fra Filippo was as unlike to his fellow-friar Angelico in his genius, as in the history of his adventurous life. An orphan-boy, educated by the charity of the Carmelites in Florence, and received into their order in early youth, he sketched in the chapel of Masaccio when his superiors would have had him to sing in the choir; and at the age of eighteen he fled from the convent. Taken on the coast near Ancona by a Barbary corsair, he was a slave two years. After his release, his roving temper led him through most of the states of Italy, from Naples to Padua; and his life was divided between the enthusiastic prosecution of art and indulgence in gross sensuality, at which his patron Cosmo de' Medici, and the religious society that he had abandoned, connived for the sake of his vigorous talents. At Prato, while he painted for a nunnery, he became enamoured of a novice, and carried her off; and this female accompanied his wanderings for many years, till he died at Spoleto, believed to have been poisoned by her kinsmen. Few of his easel-pictures are good; but in some of his frescoes, where the subject called for the expression of vigorous action and strong feeling, and was not materially disfigured by his prevailing harshness, he showed himself truly a master. His best frescoes are at Prato in the parochial church, and at Florence in Santa Maria Novella.

THE RISE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS.

We now reach a point, at which the development of art begins to display itself in three different quarters with very dissimilar results. The Florentine artists, departing equally far from Masaccio and from Angelico, were yet extremely various in manner as well as merit; but their history finally matured that cold though scientific school, from which issued Michel Angelo. In the district of Perugia, there arose a separate school, which,

originating in Florence, attached itself to Fra Angelico's tone of feeling, and ended in the timid but warmly devotional taste of Pietro Perugino, the first teacher of Raffaelle. In the Venetian territories, all earlier tendencies gave way to the study of colouring.

The Florentine School from about 1470.

Besides the improvements in the mechanism of painting, various other influences, some of which had already acted powerfully, now concurred in affecting art at Florence, and, particularly, in precluding all unity of purpose. The devotional spirit of the older masters, though it still influenced some minds, was not general. Chased, at first, by that inquiring disposition, of which Savonarola became the organ, it was now also weakened in the professors of art by the new study of classical sculpture, and was at length farther diminished by political events which awakened in every mind the spirit of citizenship. The Florentine artists were thus divided between a tendency towards the style of familiar life (which, if it had been long indulged, might have anticipated the formation of the Flemish school), and that aspiration after truth and ideality in the design of the human figure, which began with the sculptors, and under Michel Angelo became the prevalent impulse.

Seven of these artists require some notice :—Sandro or Alessandro Botticelli (1437—1515); Filippo Lippi the younger, called Filippino, the son of Fra Filippo by the runaway novice (1460—1505); Raffaellino, called Del Garbo (1466—1524); Luca Signorelli of Cortona (1440—1521); Cosimo Rosselli, a noble Florentine, who died after 1496; Domenico Corradi, called Del Ghirlandajo (1451—1495); and Andrea Del Verocchio, the sculptor. The first four may be considered as having, in general, prosecuted the tendency of Fra Filippo; the three others coincided in their attachment to minute observation of individual nature.

Botticelli, the scholar of Filippo and the teacher of Filippino, equalled his master in the expression of strong

passion; and deserves especial attention for having, at the same time with Mantegna, or earlier, brought engraving into practical use. In the latter part of his life he attached himself to the religious opinions of Savonarola, abandoned his art as sinful, and died in poverty. Filippino united the force of his father and Sandro, with much more taste and elevation than either; his earlier works, which were also his best, excel all others of his age for general arrangement, and the form of the heads; and the beauty of profile in some of his Madonnas, has scarcely ever been exceeded. Perhaps his best efforts are his frescoes in Masaccio's chapel of the Carmine, especially the Peter and Paul. His pupil Raffaellino exhibited much of the warm feeling that inspired the Umbrian school; but this promising artist degenerated, like many others of his time. The same fate befell Rosselli, whose masterpiece, the Miracle of the Cup in the Florentine church of Sant' Ambruogio (marked 1456), is worthy of Angelico in expression, while, in its treatment of the draperies and accessories, it is superior to any work between his time and that of Masaccio. Another piece in the same church exhibits his decline; and a lunette in Santa Maria Novella his utter decay. Verocchio's claims to notice as a painter, arise chiefly from his having taught Leonardo; and a picture in the Florentine academy, the Baptism of Christ, which seems to be his only remaining specimen, contains the angel said by Vasari to have been painted by Da Vinci, and to have disgusted his master with the art. But the two greatest of the artists who have been here grouped together, were Signorelli and Ghirlandajo, men of an entirely opposite turn of mind. The works of the former were distinguished for energy of action, strength of character, and a correctness of anatomy not previously attained. His best remains in Tuscany are in the cathedral of Orvieto, and in the obscure monastery of Monte Oliveto Maggiore, between Siena and Montepulciano. Ghirlandajo, the teacher of Michel Angelo, was a man whom diligence, atoning for inferiority of genius, enabled to

bring the art of fresco to a perfection which no succeeding artist surpassed. His management of light and shade was masterly, his grouping and composition excellent, and his drawing pure and correct; while his best paintings represent with admirable clearness and vivacity the appearances of common life. His altar-pieces are to be found in Florence and elsewhere; and his advancement in fresco may be traced step by step in that city. His works in the latter class, still to be seen in the church and cloister of Ognissanti, belong to 1480; those in Santa Trinità to 1485; and his masterpiece, the chapel of the choir in Santa Maria Novella, to 1490.

The side-walls of the renowned Sistine chapel in the Vatican, built in 1473, still present frescoes by four of those Florentine masters; Ghirlandajo, Signorelli, Botticelli, and Rosselli. These paintings are eclipsed by the great works of Michel Angelo in the same chapel; their lamentable decay, their position, and the smallness of the figures, make it difficult to inspect them; and the golden fringes and glories, which were lavished on them to gratify the bad taste of Sixtus IV., unite with the other causes in condemning them to neglect. Yet some of the pieces are amongst the best efforts of those artists. The series on the left of the door represents the History of Moses; that on the right the Life of the Saviour. The finest of Botticelli's unites in one composition different events from the former series; Signorelli's Moses and Zippora, and Ghirlandajo's Calling of Peter and Andrew, are equally characteristic; but Rosselli's Adoration of the Golden Calf is much inferior to all of these.

The painters of the Sistine chapel lived to see the most admirable works of the Florentine school, those of Leonardo Da Vinci (1452—1519). This great man, possessing universal accomplishments, as an artist, a scholar, and a man of science and of the world, liked better to theorize, observe, and commit his inferences and perceptions to his memorandum-book, than to weary himself with those slavish details which are essential

to the production of every immortal work. From these causes, aided by his extreme fastidiousness of taste and love for minute finish, his works were few, and scarcely one of them was ever completed. But this very universality of capacity, with his eagerly inquiring spirit, qualified him to supply the defects under which art yet laboured: no one has so good a claim as he, to be considered the parent of the highest school in his art; and no artist, before or since, has ever united in himself so many of the most illustrious qualities of genius.*

His most characteristic excellence, in his own profession, is his tone of feeling and imagination, which is mild, graceful, and poetically devotional; too ethereal for effectively depicting scenes from active life, but admirably harmonized to religious subjects.† To these merits in the poetical elements of his art, he added others not less valuable in the practical; for not only was he the first who exhibited minutely scientific anatomical knowledge, but he set a perfect example of relief and harmony in colouring, for which, especially in that dark rich style which

* For an estimate of Leonardo's originality and acuteness as a man of science, see Hallam's Literature, vol. i. p. 303.

† "When the school of Fra Filippo undertook subjects consonant to their turn for action and gesture, they represented them in general correctly, often indeed with extreme felicity; and the school of Cosimo Rosselli frequently delight us with their sharp and significant delineation of character. But when they had to express pure sentiment and religious feeling, all these painters thoroughly misconceived the spirit of their task. They were especially infelicitous in characterizing the Madonna, a conception which, easily degraded, had been apprehended with incomparably greater purity by the followers of Giotto. In the works of these older artists, it is true, the spectator may deceive himself; since their light and general indications of feeling and character leave wide room for the play of our fancies. But the more definite delineation of the later Florentines puts it beyond all doubt, that the Madonnas of Fra Filippo are usually vulgar, those of Cosimo Rosselli hideous, those of Sandro and Ghirlandajo worthy female cits, those of Filippino pretty lasses. Leonardo, on the other hand, succeeded in throwing a mysterious charm even over his earlier Madonnas; and to those of the middle period of his life, while they possess a ravishing beauty of form and grace of gesture, he imparted a sort of dignified air which irresistibly commands reverence."—Rumohr, vol. ii. p. 309.

is most common with him, his pictures and those of his school are at this day a banquet to the eye.

We have lost some of Leonardo's greatest works, including his celebrated cartoons of Paradise and the Battle of the Standard; and he has been so often imitated, that the genuineness of his paintings is in most cases a matter of doubt, though even some of the acknowledged copies or imitations are pictures of uncommon excellence. Among the few pieces which yet remain of his earlier period, ending about 1482, the surest is the decaying fresco which fills a lunette in the cloisters of Sant' Onofrio in Rome, representing the Madonna and Child, with a half-length of the Abbot of the monastery. The celebrated Medusa-head, in the Scuola Toscana of the Ufizj in Florence, has also been referred to this time, together with a Madonna in the mansion of the Buonvisi at Lucca; but the best and latest efforts of this his early manhood, seem to be the Saint Catherine (now in Copenhagen), and two unfinished pieces, the Adoration of the Magi in the Ufizj, and a Saint Jerome, which was in the gallery of the late Cardinal Fesch. About 1482 Leonardo was invited to Milan by Lodovico Sforza, who employed him chiefly as a civil engineer. There, however, he executed his greatest work, the renowned painting of the Last Supper, in the refectory of the Dominican convent Delle Grazie. This picture has undergone repeated injuries and restorations; as it now stands, no part of it belongs to its presumed author, excepting the heads of the Saviour and three apostles; and these, like the rest, are scarcely distinguishable. But engravings, partly formed from old copies, partly from the original in its less decayed state, have made known all over Europe the leading characteristics and some portion of the merits of this admirable composition, which, besides its technical excellence as an achievement of art, is universally recognised as one of the finest among all specimens of truth, variety, and life in expression. Leonardo remained at Milan till it was taken by the French in 1499, and left behind him a rising school of skilful pupils. He

then returned to Florence, where he continued till the accession of Leo X., when he went for a short time to Rome. To this second residence in his native city, belong some of his best works. The most celebrated of these is the likeness of Madonna Lisa, which occupied the artist four years;* and another very beautiful picture is the female portrait of the Doria Palace in Rome, improperly called Queen Joanna of Naples. In 1515, rivalled by Michel Angelo, neglected by the capricious pope, and courted by Francis I., Leonardo travelled into France. He died at Fontainebleau, while the king hung over his bed and supported him in his arms.

The Umbrian or Roman School.

The style which, late in the fifteenth century, arose at Assisi, Foligno, and Perugia, presents a very perplexed history.† But the infancy of art in that retired corner is highly interesting, especially because it was the nursery of the Roman masters who adorned the succeeding age.

The Umbrian painters appear to have at first studied both the older Florentines and the decaying school of Siena; but it is needless to attempt the task of tracing their progress till we reach Nicola of Foligno, called Alunno, who painted for about forty years, ending in 1499. In some of his works, the tenderness of expression is much in the style of Angelico; and this indeed appears to have been the general tone of his genius.‡

* Now in the Louvre (No. 1092, Catalogue of 1833), making one in a series of nine real or supposed works by the master (Nos. 1084 to 1092). The National Gallery in London contains an admirable Disputation in the Temple (from the Aldobrandini Gallery), which belongs either to Leonardo, or, more probably, to his school at Milan.

† Some light has been thrown upon it by Lanzi, and very much by Rumohr, but the facts are still provokingly scanty.

‡ See Vasari (Vita di Pinturicchio), who describes two weeping angels, forming part of a Pietà by Nicola in the cathedral of Foligno, as all but inimitable in expression.

Passing over Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, and Andrea called L'Ingegno, we reach the most celebrated artists of this district,—Bernardino Pinturicchio (1454—1513), and Pietro Vannucci, called Perugino from his citizenship in Perugia (1446—1524).

Although Pietro's tone of feeling was clearly derived from the older painters of his own province, he borrowed from the Florentines, among whom he long resided, much of their technical skill. Michel Angelo avowed for him a contempt which might have been justified by those works executed after 1500, when he settled at Perugia, and established a regular picture-manufactory; but, notwithstanding his littleness and stiffness of manner, and his deficiency in invention, his best specimens exhibit a skill in the bright colouring, a warmth and elevation of feeling, and a frequent beauty of contour in the heads, which, in themselves, are sufficient to constitute high excellence, and have a double claim to our gratitude from their influence on the genius of Pietro's immortal scholar. Perhaps none of his existing pieces are earlier than the compartments which, in company with Signorelli and the other Tuscans, he painted in the Sistine chapel. The best preserved of these, the Presentation of the Keys to Saint Peter, displays much, both of the Florentine adherence to nature, and of his own capacity for appreciating the exalted spirit of religious history. After 1495, his manner exhibited a gradual deterioration. This decline is not complete in the well-known frescoes of the Sala di Cambio at Perugia, finished in 1500; but it is lamentably perceptible in other pieces, with which he and his scholars filled that town and its district. His group of Saints executed in 1521, for the Perugian convent of San Severo (above which Raffaelle had previously painted the celestial regions) is a striking example.

Pinturicchio, the early friend of Raffaelle, is generally considered to have been another scholar of Perugino, and was infected, like his master, by the love of gain. His pictures, executed under the influence of this spirit,

are chiefly in Rome; and none of his works there, except the frescoes in Ara Celi, are at all worthy either of his reputation or of his youthful genius. But the Accademia delle Arti at Perugia possesses an altar-piece of his, dated in 1495, which, composed of different parts, and retaining much antique simplicity, displays also in full force the devotional expression of the Umbrians, united with extreme beauty in the countenances.

The history of this old and simple school is not complete without the name of Francesco Raibolini, called Francia, a Bolognese (1450—1517). Celebrated in early life as a goldsmith, Francia afterwards acquired equal fame as a painter, and was the head of that small class of artists who, early in the sixteenth century, adhered rigidly to the ancient style, defying the allurements held out by the Romans, the Florentines, and the Venetians in combination. His paintings, all sacred, have the old Umbrian spirit in its utmost purity, though with a tendency to ordinary expression, which makes them, notwithstanding their greater freedom of manner, show to disadvantage beside the monotonous idealism of Pietro Perugino. The artist's genius is best estimated at Bologna, which contains several of his most successful works.*

The Venetian School.

The first decided improvement in Venice originated, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, with Gentile, an artist who came from Fabriano, between Perugia and Macerata. But art in this quarter was not prominently characteristic till about 1450, when the best painters were divided into two opposing schools.

The one was arrayed under Francesco Squarcione of Padua (1394—1474), who, in his travels through Italy and Greece, collected classical sculptures, and formed on these a harsh but imposing style, which he communicated to his numerous pupils. The works of the master

* Gallery of the Academy; (Pinacoteca); Nos. 78 to 83.

are few and doubtful; and the influence of that opposite taste which distinguished the school of the Bellini is perceptible in the works of his Paduan scholar, Andrea Mantegna (1430—1506). This great artist, while he profited much by the skill of the Bellini in colouring, always retained his early taste for classical purity and beauty; and some of his works, executed in Mantua, where he spent most of his life at the court of the Gonzaga, have been pronounced to be inferior to the earlier works of Da Vinci in little except the indescribable charm of expression. His most admired works were the Cartoons of the Triumph of Julius Cæsar, intended as designs for tapestries in a hall of the ducal palace. These celebrated pieces were purchased from the Gonzaga by Charles I. of England, and, having escaped the general dispersion of the king's invaluable collection, are now at Hampton Court. They are nine in number, painted in water-colour upon paper, and are in tolerable preservation. They convey a most favourable idea, not merely of the painter's skill in colouring, but of his observation of life and his grandeur of conception and feeling. Musicians, spectators, prisoners, Roman soldiers, gorgeous spoils, priests and offerings, follow each other in a magnificent procession, to which several groups give pathetic interest. Mantegna's success as one of the earliest engravers has already been noticed.*

His example was followed by very few in the north of Italy. Venice, about the middle of the century, received from the Germans, through Antonello of Messina, the secret of painting in oil. The influence which this discovery, now for the first time crossing the Alps, exercised on the taste of the Venetians, may have been increased by other causes. Among these the most obvious is the picturesque richness of their city, both in position and architecture, to which may be added the semi-oriental aspect of its costumes, native as well as foreign. Certain it is, that the artists at once,

* Ottley's History of Engraving, vol. i. p. 404, vol. ii. p. 483.

with few exceptions, such as the Vivarini and Crivelli, devoted themselves ardently to the improvement of colouring. Their success was rapid beyond example ; for Titian was the scholar of Giovanni Bellini (1426—1516), who, with his contemporary and rival, Vittore Carpaccio, brought this seducing feature of art to a degree of beauty which truly left little for their great successors to add. In some of Giovanni's later works, still common in Venice, he even emulated the skill in design which distinguished his rising pupils. The Academy in that city contains various paintings of Carpaccio, especially his famous scenes from the legend of Saint Ursula.

Many of these early Venetian pictures are delightful to the eye, as masses of rich and harmoniously disposed colour: some are even pleasing delineations of ordinary and familiar expression. But in all of them we seek in vain for those loftier qualities, that depth and purity of feeling, that wonderful sympathy with the spirit of religious subjects, which, in so many Florentine and Umbrian works, more than atone for deficiency in all the mechanical merits of art.

PART III.

MODERN ITALY.

CHAPTER I.

The Political History of Italy till the commencement of the French Revolution.

A. D. 1500—A. D. 1789.

FIRST AGE (1500—1559):—The Spaniards in Italy—Julius and Leo—Francis I. and Charles V.—The Sack of Rome—The Treaty of Chateau-Cambresis. SECOND AGE (1559—1700): —Character of the Times—THE SPANISH PROVINCES—Revolts —Grievances—*Naples and Sicily*—Fall of the Neapolitan Parliament—Sicilian Parliaments—*The Duchy of Milan*—Changes —Results—PAPAL STATES—New Territories—Government— TUSCANY—Cosmo — Taxation — Municipalities — THE THREE SMALL DUCHIES—The Este — The Farnese—The Gonzaga— THE FOUR REPUBLICS—San Marino—*Lucca*—Its Oligarchy— Peasantry—*Genoa*—Constitution — *Venice*—Decay—The Conspiracy—The War of Candia—PIEDMONT—Comparative Prosperity—State of Society—Fall of the Parliaments. THIRD AGE (1700—1789):—The Four Wars—The Treaty of Aix la-Chapelle—NAPLES AND SICILY—Don Carlos and Tanucci— Ferdinand's Government—Communal Boards—The Two Privileged Classes—Justice — Taxation—Vassalage—Entails — THE PAPAL STATES—Weakness of Government—Foreign Relations —Pius the Sixth—THE SARDINIAN KINGDOM—Victor Amadeus—Evils in Society—PARMA AND MODENA—The Bourbons —The Este — THE FOUR REPUBLICS —*Lucca* —Oligarchy — *San Marino*—Alberoni's Attack—*Genoa*—Revolt of Corsica— *Venice*—Statistics—Society—Church-Commission—THE AUSTRIAN PRINCEDOMS—*Milan and Mantua*—Maria Theresa's Administrative Constitution — Joseph's Reforms — *Tuscany*— Leopold's Legislation—Reforms—Faults—Communal Councils.

POPES.

1503. Pius III. (Francesco Piccolomini)

1503. Julius II. (Giuliano della Rovere)

1513. Leo X. (Giovanni de' Medici)
1522. Adrian VI. (Adrian Florent)
1523. Clement VII. (Giulio de' Medici)
1534. Paul III. (Alessandro Farnese)
1550. Julius III. (Giovanni-Maria del Monte)
1555. Marcellus II. (Marcello Cervini)
— Paul IV. (Giovanni-Pietro Caraffa)
1559. Pius IV. (Giovanni-Angelo de' Medici)
1566. Pius V. (Michele Ghisleri)
1572. Gregory XIII. (Ugo Buoncompagni)
1585. Sixtus V. (Felice Peretti)
1590. Urban VII. (Giovanni-Battista Castagna)
— Gregory XIV. (Nicola Sfondrati)
1591. Innocent IX. (Giovanni-Antonio Facchinetti)
1592. Clement VIII. (Ippolito Aldobrandini)
1605. Leo XI. (Alessandro-Ottaviano de' Medici)
— Paul V. (Camillo Borghese)
1621. Gregory XV. (Alessandro Ludovisi)
1623. Urban VIII. (Maffeo Barberini)
1644. Innocent X. (Giovanni-Battista Panfili)
1655. Alexander VII. (Fabio Chigi)
1667. Clement IX. (Giulio Rospigliosi)
1670. Clement X. (Giovanni-Battista Altieri)
1676. Innocent XI. (Benedetto Odescalchi)
1689. Alexander VIII. (Pietro Ottoboni)
1691. Innocent XII. (Antonio Pignatelli)
1700. Clement XI. (Giovanni-Francesco Albani)
1721. Innocent XIII. (Michel-Angelo Conti)
1724. Benedict XIII. (Pietro-Francesco Orsini)
1730. Clement XII. (Lorenzo Corsini)
1740. Benedict XIV. (Prospero Lambertini)
1758. Clement XIII. (Carlo Rezzonico)
1769. Clement XIV. (Giovanni-Vincenzo-Antonio Ganganelli)
1775. Pius VI. (Giovanni-Angelo Braschi)

NAPLES.

1503-1699. Kings of Spain of the House of Austria:—possessing Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, and (from 1559) the Milanese
1701-1713. Wars
1713. Charles VI. of Austria (emperor): — Naples, with Sardinia (till 1718); Sicily (from 1718); the Milanese; and Mantua
1738. Charles VII. (Don Carlos, a Spanish Bourbon): — Naples and Sicily
1759. Ferdinand IV.:—Naples and Sicily

PIEDMONT.

1504. Charles III., Duke of Savoy
1553. Emmanuel Philibert
1580. Charles Emmanuel I.
1630. Victor Amadeus I.
1637. Francis Hyacinth
1638. Charles Emmanuel II.
1675. Victor Amadeus II. (king of Sicily 1713: king of Sardinia 1720)
1730. Charles Emmanuel III.
1773. Victor Amadeus III.

TUSCANY: GRAND DUKES.

1. *House of Medici.*

1537. Cosmo I. Duke (created Grand Duke 1569)

1574. Francesco I.
1587. Ferdinand I.
1609. Cosmo II.
1621. Ferdinand II.
1670. Cosmo III.
1723. Giovanni-Gastone

2. *House of Lorraine.*

1737. Francis (emperor in 1745)
1765. Peter Leopold

PARMA: DUKES.

1. *House of Farnese.*

1545. Pietro Luigi
1547. Ottavio
1586. Alessandro
1592. Ranuccio I.
1622. Odoardo
1646. Ranuccio II.
1694. Francesco
1727. Antonio

2. *Elder Spanish Bourbons.*

1731. Charles (King of Naples 1738)

3. *Younger Spanish Bourbons.*

1748. Philip
1765. Ferdinand

MODENA: HOUSE OF ESTE:

1. *With Ferrara.*

1505. Alfonso I.
1534. Ercole II.
1559. Alfonso II.

2. *Without Ferrara.*

1597. Cesare
1628. Alfonso III.
1629. Francesco I.
1658. Alfonso IV.
1662. Francesco II.
1694. Rinaldo
1737. Francesco III.
1780. Ercole III.

AUSTRIAN STATES IN ITALY, SINCE 1748.

1748. Francis I., Emperor of Germany, and Maria Theresa
1765. Joseph II. Emperor

MANTUA AND MONTFERRAT: HOUSE OF GONZAGA.

1519. Federigo II., Duke in 1530 (acquires Montferrat in 1533)
1540. Francesco II.
1550. Guglielmo
1587. Vincenzo I.
1612. Francesco III.
— Ferdinand
1626. Vincenzo II.
1627. Charles I. Duc de Nevers
1637. Charles III.
1665. Charles IV.: died 1708

URBINO: DUKES.

1482. Guido Ubaldo I. da Montefeltre
1508. Francesco Maria della Rovere
1538. Guido Ubaldo II. della Rovere
1574. Francesco Maria II. della Rovere: died 1631

THE chronicles of national servitude in Italy, for those three centuries which intervened between the invasion by Charles VIII. and that of Napoleon, separate themselves naturally into three successive periods, of unequal duration and dissimilar aspect,—an age of convulsion, an age of oppression, an age of partial and slowly progressive improvement.

FIRST AGE:

FROM 1500 TO 1559.

In the first year of the sixteenth century, Louis of France and Ferdinand of Spain executed without opposition the iniquitous treaty of Granada, by which they agreed to share between them Naples and Sicily. But immediately they quarrelled over the spoil; and Gonsalvo de Cordova, the Catholic king's celebrated general, having expelled the French in 1503, founded in both provinces a Spanish dominion which lasted two centuries. Three years afterwards, the warlike and ambitious pontiff Julius II. rescued Romagna from Cesar Borgia; and he may be also considered to have, for the first time, practically established the papal sovereignty in the territories of Bologna and Perugia. The league of Cambray, formed unsuccessfully by the pope, the emperor, and the French king, for the purpose of chastising the Venetians, was followed by a general Italian war, in which Spain assisted Venice and Rome against France. It was terminated by the battle of Ravenna, where the French purchased a bloody victory with the life of their youthful general, Gaston de Foix. The new pope, Leo X., illustrious, like his father Lorenzo de' Medici, for his patronage of letters and art, possessed neither political sagacity nor moral principle to qualify him for rescuing his country from her foreign spoilers, a design devised by the fervid intellect of his predecessor. Her destinies, during many generations, were to be determined by a new act in the drama, the characters of which now began to advance upon the stage.

In 1515, Francis I. ascended the throne of France: Charles V., succeeding next year to the Spanish dominions in the Netherlands and Italy, was almost immediately elected Emperor of Germany. These two celebrated rivals instantly began a contest which they bequeathed to their descendants. The plains of Lom-

bardy became the principal arena of the struggle; but the issue was affected both by the political vicissitudes of northern Europe and by the great Reformation in religion. Leo was succeeded by Adrian, a devout and honest barbarian; and this short pontificate was followed by that of Clement, a bastard of the house of Medici, an intriguing revengeful man, whose character unfitted him equally for resisting Protestantism and for vindicating Italian independence. In the campaign of 1524, the Chevalier Bayard fell at the battle of the Val d'Aosta; and in the spring of the ensuing year, beneath the walls of Pavia, Francis was defeated and taken prisoner. On his release, the pope, changing sides in the hope of preserving an equipoise among the contending powers, concluded an alliance with him, in which he was joined by Venice, at length alarmed and active,—by Florence, subject again to the Medici since 1512,—and by Francesco, the last of the Sforza. Rome was now exposed to the most terrible calamity it had endured since the irruption of the barbarians. Bourbon, the revolted Constable of France, invaded the papal states with a mutinous imperial army, chiefly composed of Germans and Spaniards; on the 6th of May 1527, he stormed the capital; and, though he himself fell in the assault, his troops occupied the place ten months, subjecting the inhabitants to every sort of outrage and cruelty. In the mean time, Andrea Doria, the celebrated Genoese admiral, with the aid of the imperialists, established in his native city an aristocratic commonwealth.

But Clement and Francis were equally tired of war. The latter, by the treaty of Cambray, resigned all his foreign claims; and in February and March 1530, Charles V. received from the pope the crowns of Lombardy and the Empire. From that time he was the absolute monarch of Italy; the princes holding their lands, and the titular republics their constitutions, by the tenure of his sovereign permission. Florence alone, once more rebellious, but abandoned by Charles and Francis to the vengeance of Clement and his family,

remained to give employment to the imperial troops. The ten months' siege of the city, in which its fortifications were strengthened by Michel Angelo, and its militia organized by Machiavelli, was the very noblest era in its whole history; but treachery combined with misfortune baffled the heroism of the citizens, and, in August 1530, its administrators capitulated. Next year, Alessandro de' Medici took possession of Florence under an imperial charter, constituting him its first Duke.

The Italians were at length hopeless, passive, and enslaved; but renewed wars among their spoilers desolated the country for a generation longer. In 1559, the treaty of Chateau-Cambresis permanently defined its political relations as follows.

Philip II., to whom, as the head of the Spanish branch of the Austrian family, descended the conquests of his father, retained on the mainland the kingdom of Naples and the extensive duchy of Milan, adding to these the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. The Popes governed the same territories of which we have already seen them in possession. Parma and Piacenza, likewise seized by Julius II., on the pretence of their being included in the exarchate, had been bestowed by Paul III., in 1545, on his own kinsmen, the Farnese; and that house was now confirmed in those provinces, to be held as an independent dukedom, paying feudal homage to the Holy See. The little state of Urbino, acquired in the thirteenth century by soldiers of the house of Montefeltre, now remained with their successors, the family Della Rovere, who had been, in virtue of a papal rescript, dukes since the year 1474. Cosmo de' Medici, receiving the duchy of Florence on the murder of his wretched cousin Alessandro, speedily gained a right to call himself sovereign of Tuscany; for in 1557 he became master of the district of Siena, which in the earlier years of the century had bravely vindicated its republican independence. A part of the Sienese coast, however, including the Monte Argentaro, and stretching northward

from that promontory, was garrisoned by the King of Spain, forming a little province called the Stato de' Presidj. The Este were still dukes of Ferrara, Modena, and Reggio. The Gonzaga, created dukes of Mantua in 1530, added to this territory by marriage the marquisate of Montferrat, of which they obtained possession soon after the death of the last male of the Palæologi in 1533. Saluzzo, on the extinction of its princely house in 1548, was seized by France, to which its marquises had recently paid feudal homage. The rest of Piedmont, after having been ravaged for seventy years by all the invading armies, was restored to the spirited Emmanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. The treaty recognised four Italian republics: Lucca, Genoa, Venice, and the insignificant San Marino.

During the whole period now reviewed, the wretchedness inflicted on Italy by the foreign soldiery, and especially by those mutinous robbers who composed the armies of the empire and of Spain, was such as had not been exceeded in any age of her eventful history. Cities were plundered and burned, rural districts were converted into wastes, families were despoiled and dishonoured, individuals were imprisoned, tortured, and put to death. And yet, over this blood-stained arena, on which a nation, summoning up its expiring strength, fought unwisely, though not ingloriously, its last battle for independence,—over this wild and troubled scene, where danger stalked without and treason lurked within, —genius diffused a radiant light, that died away after peace had arrived, hand in hand with bondage. Almost all the greatest of those names that make the modern Italians proud of the sixteenth century, presented themselves in groups which disappeared before the age had proceeded halfway towards its close.

SECOND AGE:

FROM 1559 TO 1700.

The latter half of the sixteenth century, with the whole of the seventeenth, composed for the Italians an era of servitude, unmitigated and uninterrupted, irritating and debasing, suffering no exemption, and allowing no hope. The armed hand of Spain crushed the fairest provinces of the peninsula, as well as its two large and beautiful islands; but, ruinous as the statistical evils were which flowed from administrative ignorance and oppression, they were as nothing when compared with that fearful corruption in morals, which the new masters of Italy industriously circulated through the whole system of society. Even the states nominally independent fell, one after another, into a lethargic subservience to Spanish policy and interests; and, in private life, long before the seventeenth century had closed, there was not a town within the Alps that did not pride itself on copying in little the exotic vices of Milan and Naples.

Amidst the tumult of the middle ages, the warm imagination of the south had demanded from the church a ritual distinguished by pomp and corporeal allegory; but religious truth had nowhere been more boldly canvassed, ecclesiastical reforms nowhere more urgently enforced, theological speculations nowhere carried so near to the very verge of unbelief. After the breaking out of the Reformation, and the sittings of the Council of Trent, the Romish Church, robbed of half its European kingdom, retired to intrench itself more strongly within the countries which still acknowledged its sway. It now not only armed itself with a more exclusive intolerance in doctrine, but disciplined its clergy into an honourable strictness of behaviour; and, in all the influences which this altered aspect of religion exercised over life and manners, Italy was thenceforth second to no region but one, where papal orthodoxy sat enshrined in the silent halls of the Escurial.

In secular relations the change was still more remarkable. The ancient virtues fled to other climes, or lingered only in a few noble hearts: but of the ancient vices, while those that sprung from the abuse of freedom perished with that which fed them, others were found to flourish united with modern corruptions. The ancient spirit of revenge, kindled into phrensy by Castilian fancies about knightly honour, but no longer ennobled by personal courage or manly self-respect, made Italy for many generations infamous as the scene of poisonings and assassinations. A new order of nobles arose, who bought patents of birth from sovereign princes, and considered titles essential to rank; a class who, like their predecessors before the fall of the western empire, or their contemporaries in Madrid at the court of the third and fourth Philips, beheld with contempt commercial pursuits, and indeed all activity whatever, except in that profession of arms from which they were debarred. A nobility like this, precluded from achieving those public services, which have made the aristocracy useful even when their privileges were most burdensome, wanted, in order to render it utterly contemptible, nothing but what was given to it by a few institutions that speedily became universal;—entails of lands without limits, which made the heads of families insolvent debtors, the younger males beggars, and the females nuns,—a revival of those feudal burdens which had long ago become useless and unjust,—and an insidious licentiousness, favoured by the introduction of cicisbeism, the very worst of all the usages which Spanish sovereignty introduced among the Italians. The mass of the commonalty, who in every respect were less corrupted than the higher ranks, were shut out equally from mental cultivation, and from such rights as would have enabled them to improve their condition; and those bright endowments of intellect which still dwelt in the nation, were destitute of every thing that could have furnished either inspiration or encouragement.

The Spanish Provinces.

In Sardinia, during this long period, there occurred no fact which historians have esteemed worthy to be minutely related. Central Lombardy witnessed no event more important than the firm resistance which, soon after its subjugation, its people successfully offered to the plans of Charles V. and his son, for introducing the Spanish Inquisition. In the Neapolitan provinces the same exertion of spirit was crowned with the same result; and in both cases the popular discontent was aided by the influence of the popes, who had already organized an Italian Inquisition under their own superintendence, and had always looked with disfavour on the royal tribunal which made the name so terrible in Spain.

The only other public occurrences of moment were four revolts, all bloody, and all finally unsuccessful. The earliest, which broke out in 1590, had a political and systematic aim. It was planned in Calabria, where its fomenters were the Dominicans, headed by the enthusiastic friar Campanella. In 1647 Naples was desolated by the famous insurrection led by Masaniello, or Tommaso Aniello, a fisherman of Amalfi. It was a mere sedition of the populace, who had been enraged by a tax imposed on fruit, the chief food of the poor, and almost the only article of consumption that had escaped an impost. In the course of the same year, the royal governor of Sicily was driven from Palermo; but a better sustained rebellion broke out at Messina in 1674, when the citizens proclaimed Louis XIV. king of the island. A naval war ensued in the Mediterranean; and in 1678, by the treaty of Nimeguen, the French monarch basely abandoned the Messinese to the vengeance of their masters.

To risings and revolutions, indeed, the people were driven by manifold temptations. In the southern provinces and the islands, the government could not protect either property or persons from lawless violence. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,

the coasts were continually infested by Turkish or Algerine corsairs; the fields were ravaged, houses, villages, or whole towns were burned; and thousands of the inhabitants were carried off into irredeemable slavery. In the interior of the Neapolitan territory native robbers were scarcely less destructive; large troops of them plundered or exacted ransoms, and more than once resisted successfully battalions of regular soldiers.

But besides these calamities, and such others as arose from individual oppression, the administration of the Spaniards caused, by its very nature, evils which, though less atrocious, were sufficient to make the country at once poor and miserable.

Their system of government in Italy had been devised by Ferdinand the Catholic, and was brought into operation by Charles V., through the instrumentality of his celebrated counsellor, Pietro de Toledo. From 1558 the affairs of the Italian provinces were directed by a Supreme Council residing at Madrid, though including, besides Spaniards, several natives of Italy. Under this board stood the four resident viceroys, of Naples, Milan, Sicily, and Sardinia, who were invariably Spanish nobles. The principle of those local arrangements, which were common to all the dominions of the same power, was abundantly simple; for it consisted in regarding the conquered countries as mere estates calculated to fill the royal coffers.

Naples and Sicily.—Under the viceroy at Naples there was placed a board, partly composed of Spaniards, called the Collateral Council, which was at once the highest legislative body, the court of justice in the last resort, and the head of the executive government.* The laws were made more and more complicated; arbitrary sen-

* Orloff, Mémoires, tome iii. chap. viii. p. 116-142. Giannone, later books of his history, passim. Colletta, Storia del Reame di Napoli, lib. i. cap. 1; ed. Capolago, 1834. Botta, Storia d' Italia dal 1534 sino al 1789, lib. xxiv.; tom. v. p. 305-314, ed. Paris, 10 tom. 1832.

tences, pronounced by the judges, were often as capriciously suspended by warrants from the crown; and the only tendency to improvement appeared in some efforts which were made to extend the jurisdiction of the royal tribunals at the expense of the courts-baron.

The baronial Parliaments, in which the deputies from the towns either ceased to attend or became perfectly passive, were summoned very frequently during the sixteenth century; but their business was confined to the voting of subsidies or donatives to the crown, and the presenting of petitions for additional privileges in favour of the aristocracy. The viceroy, who was usually present, delivered messages from the king, demanding money; and the votes upon such requests are described by historians as forming the ordinary purpose of the meetings.* At length these diets were discovered to be useless; since the taxes levied by orders pronounced in the Collateral Council were paid with as little reluctance as those voted by the barons; and on the 14th day of September 1642 was held the last sitting of the Neapolitan parliament.

But after this time, when a tax was contemplated which the people were likely to resist, recourse was had to a convenient substitute for the states-general. In such emergencies, the government demanded a vote of supply from the municipal corporations in each of the principal towns. These bodies, called Seggi, Sedili, or Piazze, were of extreme antiquity, and were modelled on councils of the same sort in the metropolis. Every city had several of them, all of which (except one in Naples and one in each of a few other places) were

* There were, for example, parliaments in 1586, 1589, 1591, 1593, 1595, 1596, 1600. Costo (continuator of Collenuccio), ed. 1613: lib. iii. iv. tom. iii. pp. 124, 128, 132, 136, 139, 141. "In the parliament of 1586," says the servile annalist, "they made to the king the usual donative of 1,200,000 ducats, and petitioned for some favours not less suitable to the greatness and magnificence of such a king, than to the incomparable obedience and fidelity of the people of the kingdom of Naples." The great king was the tyrant Philip II.; and the faithful people, when Costo wrote, were reposing after Campanella's revolt, and ripening fast for that of Masaniello.

composed exclusively of noble members, and held purity of patrician blood indispensable as a title to admission. Into the councils of the petty town of Sorrento, for example, no man could enter who was not noble by four descents. We discover applications by the crown to the Seggi as early as the year 1649; and there is no instance on record of their having refused to vote any tax that was asked of them.*

Indeed, if self-interest was to be the rule of action, no sound reason existed to prompt either the parliaments or the municipalities to a refusal. For the members themselves held their lands by feudal charters; every man's investiture, or that usage which interpreted its terms, protected him from all impositions beyond such as were covenanted in the deed; and the donatives voted did not, unless in the rare case of a special agreement, take the smallest sum from the persons who granted them. The estates held by the ecclesiastics were in like manner exempted through the immemorial privileges asserted by the church. But in the seventeenth century these two classes together possessed a large proportion, two-thirds at the very least, and perhaps as much as three-fourths, of the landed property in the state; and, consequently, the burdens which were imposed for the necessities of the whole country, fell upon the proprietors of one-fourth or one-third part of its surface. These too were the poorest class in the kingdom, unprivileged, despised, checked in agricultural pursuits by vexatious restrictions, prevented from turning to manufactures or trade by other restraints, and not less peremptorily precluded by that general poverty which incapacitated the Neapolitan provinces from forming a sufficient market. All the levies, with very partial exceptions, were exported to the royal exchequer in Spain; and the blood of the nation was drained not less freely than its treasure. The flower

* Orloff, tome ii. p. 317, tome iii. p. 148; Giannone, lib. xxxvii. cap. 4; Galanti, Descrizione di Napoli, 1792, p. 180.

of the people, both from Lower Italy and the Milanese, drafted by thousands into the Spanish armies, perished in the wars of France, Germany, and the Netherlands.*

In regard to the national diets, as well as in many other particulars, the Sicilians showed a higher spirit than any other Spanish provincials.† Their parliament was never abolished. The partial share of legislation, however, which it anciently enjoyed, had been greatly reduced by the Aragonese kings; and, after the time of Charles V. its functions were strictly confined to the voting of subsidies or donatives. This right likewise did not exclude the sovereign's prerogative of imposing by proclamation general taxes, which, in cases of extreme necessity, might affect lands of every class, and always affected such estates and towns as were not baronial.

The Sicilian parliament, formerly summoned annually, was convened, since the beginning of the sixteenth century, once only in four years. It was composed of three Bracci or Sections, which formed however one united chamber. In the section of the barons sat those nobles whose manors had a population of 300 householders. The ecclesiastical section consisted of three archbishops, six bishops, and all abbots who held their benefices by royal grant. The third section, called that of the Domain, was composed of representatives elected by such towns as were vassals of the crown. Each baron or prelate had a vote for every estate he possessed amounting to the qualification; and in the domanial section several towns might nominate the same deputy, who was entitled to give one vote for every place he represented.

The Duchy of Milan.—In the Milanese we shall dis-

* Orloff, tome iii. p. 139; Giannone, lib. xxxvi. cap. 3.—According to the latter, in the six years preceding 1638, the Spaniards exported for their wars 53,500 Neapolitans and Sicilians.

† Botta, Storia d' Italia dal 1789 al 1814, ed. Italia, 1824; lib. i. tom. i. pp. 34, 35.—Colletta, lib. viii. cap. 1. § 26, tom. ii. pp. 305, 306.

cover facts which elucidate still farther the genius of Spanish anarchy.*

Here there was much more to undo than in Lower Italy. The consular tribunal was abolished, as being by its expeditious procedure a reproach on Castilian dignity and slowness; the duties on merchandise exported, as well as on raw materials imported, were increased to an exorbitant height; monopolies held by the government became even more common than in Naples; and the liberal spirit of citizenship was put down by the institution of numerous corporations with strictly exclusive privileges. That which had been the worst fault in the older polity of the dukedom, was the system of independent tribunals and conflicting laws, enjoyed, under solemn compacts, by most of the towns which had successively submitted to Milan. This abuse was now carefully preserved, not only because it aided, through its confusion, in making every thing dependent on the central government, but because it imposed many checks on commerce, which, as the governors clearly saw, might be converted into a fruitful source of revenue.

The place of the Collateral Council in Naples was occupied here by a body called the Senate, whose eleven members, chosen by the sovereign, included all his foreign ministers, and were invested, not merely with supreme authority, administrative, judicial, and legislative, but with a power (expressly set forth in the constitutions proclaimed by Charles V.) of suspending or dispensing with all laws at pleasure. The principal heads of the system of finance were the following:—1. A permanent land-tax, most unequally assessed; 2. A direct personal tax upon merchants, proportional to their supposed amount of trade; 3. Petty and harassing duties of excise; 4. Injudicious

* Verri, Memorie Sulla Economia Pubblica di Milano, § 3—6; Carli, Relazione del Censimento dello Stato di Milano, Parte i. (among the Political Economists, tom. xx.).

imposts, increased in every successive age, on the produce of native agriculture and manufactures; 5. Oppressive government-monopolies. The Spaniards, as a Milanese writer indignantly remarks, possessed Central Lombardy for a hundred and seventy-two years. They found in its chief city 300,000 souls; they left in it scarcely a third of that number. They found in it seventy woollen manufactories; they left in it no more than five. They found agriculture skilful and flourishing; before the province was wrested from them, they had been driven to pass laws which made emigration a capital crime. The local administration presented some points of abuse that had not been paralleled since the fall of the Roman Empire. For the debts of each commune, which in some instances were enormous, every inhabitant was liable, and both his goods and his person might be seized in execution; nay, he was not freed even by paying his proportion of the demand, since the obligation lay on each individual for the whole amount.

The States of the Church.

During this period the Ecclesiastical State, in the personal history of more than one of its sovereigns, and in the relations of its polity toward Protestantism, as well as towards the secular interests of Europe, presents themes more interesting than any which are offered by the other sections of Italy. But such inquiries lie beyond the province which belongs to these pages.

The territories of the See now received their last additions. Its most important acquisition was the duchy of Ferrara, which, always admitted to be a papal fief and portion of the Exarchate, Clement VIII. seized in 1597 on the extinction of the legitimate branch of the house of Este. Next, in 1626, Urban VIII. prevailed upon the old and childless Duke of Urbino to abdicate in favour of the church. Lastly, in 1644, under Innocent X., the Roman fiefs of Castro and Ronciglione were occupied by the papal troops on the plea of debts

due by their lords the Farnese, and, being retained in security, were never redeemed.

The internal government was chiefly remarkable for adding to its own inveterate abuses many of the worst faults that disgraced the Spanish rule.

The sale of public offices had long constituted a large branch of revenue; and Clement VII. has the questionable merit of having been the first sovereign in Europe who introduced national loans. He established, in 1526, what was called a Monte non Vacabile, or perpetual funded debt, for which the creditors received interest out of the proceeds of the customs. The older expedient next pointed out the way to raise money by Monti Vacabili, or government-annuities upon lives. The army of officials, the pomp of the court, the splendid architecture of Rome, and the endowment of the families of successive pontiffs, kept the treasury in continual embarrassment. All devices failed in reducing the expenditure below the income; and, as early as 1670, the public debt amounted to fifty-two millions of crowns.*

The subjects, formerly taxed more lightly than any others in Italy, were gradually crushed beneath accumulated burdens. Subsidies, partial and rare in earlier times, were, from the days of Paul III., levied by the prerogative of the sovereign, at regular intervals of three years; and the provinces on the Adriatic, long exempt from such exactions, were placed on a footing with the rest of the state before the end of the sixteenth century. Government monopolies both in manufactures and in several branches of agriculture became as common as in the Spanish territories; and taxes on articles of consumption, as well as transit-dues on the roads, were soon exorbitant as well as general.†

* Consult Ranke, Die Römischen Päpste, vol. i. p. 404-413 (2d edit. Berlin, 1838); vol. iii. pp. 10-14, 105-109; (edit. 1836). See also (in the Respublica Romana Elzeviriana, 1629), the Reports of the Venetian Ambassadors; especially pp. 512, 513.

† Ranke, vol. i. p. 413-422; vol. iii. pp. 15-25, 109-113. Respublica Romana, p. 523-535. Sismondi, Républiques Italiennes, tome xvi. p. 188-193.

Under a system like this, we are not to wonder that the districts eastward of the Apennine, which had long retained much of the prosperity of their republican ages, gradually sunk to a level little above that of the western provinces. Their agriculture at length gave way under arbitrary interferences and oppressive imposts; the industry of the mechanics in the towns languished owing to the same causes, as well as from the failure of demand for their labour. The higher classes every where mocked the edict of Clement X., the design of which was to favour commerce by declaring its exercise compatible with nobility; and they successfully resisted attempts, like those of Innocent XII., to suppress or limit their manorial jurisdiction.*

Fierce baronial feuds in the cities of the March and of Romagna, were skilfully used by the government as excuses for tampering with the municipal franchises: the civic independence of Ancona was violently suppressed in 1532, and that of Perugia in 1540. Ferrara, indeed, received from its ecclesiastical sovereigns more extensive immunities than it had enjoyed under the Este; and a considerable part of the administration was intrusted to its three councils, consisting of the greater nobles, the lesser nobles, and the guilds.† But no real power was left even here; and although privileges in trade were long preserved, yet, before the middle of the seventeenth century, the venerable civic rights may be considered to have been wrested from every town in the east, excepting Bologna.‡ This celebrated city retained till the end of last century an aristocratic constitution, borrowing much, and particularly its hereditary turn, from the polity of the republic in the middle ages. Its administrative senate, composed of the chiefs of fifty noble families, was a British House of Peers in miniature; nobles of the second rank had a monopoly of most of the

* Muratori, Annali d' Italia, tom. xi. p. 317 (ad annum 1671), p. 409 (ad annum 1692).

† Ranke, vol. ii. p. 277-279 (ed. 1836).

‡ Ibid. vol. i. p. 382-404.

subordinate offices; and a mixed council was formed of deputies from the senate, the inferior nobles, the liberal professions, the merchants, some other corporations, and the citizens at large. The popes, however, imposed many taxes; and their resident legates had a veto on the appointments made by the senate to places of public trust.*

By far the most remarkable among modern pontiffs, was Sixtus the Fifth, the son of a peasant in the March of Ancona, a man whose firmness of purpose and soundness of views in administration restored to the papal state, during his short reign, the enjoyment of peace, of industry, and of partial prosperity.

The Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

The history of Tuscany during this period falls into two dissimilar eras,—one of severe but not unintelligent despotism, which extends over the latter half of the sixteenth century,—and another lasting a hundred years longer, in which the sovereigns, though mild and peaceful, were also ignorant, ill advised, and inactive.

The private memoirs of the cold and gloomy Cosmo, the first grand-duke, are shrouded in a mystery through which we catch only glimpses of horror. In his youth he mercilessly punished his enemies, and ungratefully cast off his kindest friends: in his old age he groaned under unspeakable wretchedness. The darkest page of his life, though not the only dark one, was the dreadful fate which befell two of his sons. The boys, who hated each other, went out to hunt, but Garcia returned alone; Giovanni was found murdered. The survivor entered the palace, and was never seen again: it was whispered that his father stabbed him in his mother's arms. The duchess died of a broken heart, and her husband abdicated in favour of his dissolute and savage son Francesco.

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* Gorani, Mémoires Secrets et Critiques de l'Italie, 1792, tome ii. p. 459-468. Descriptio Civitatis Bononiæ, p. 19-23; in Grævii Thes. Antiq. Ital. tom. vii.

Cosmo's government had been based on a mock-constitution which was given to Florence in 1532 under Alessandro. There figured in it two councils, the greater chosen for life by the dukes, the less periodically elected by the other, but neither entitled to pass any resolution that should be valid without the prince's approval.* For the purposes of taxation, and with especial reference to the Decima or old republican land-tax, Cosmo divided the citizens, according to their means, into three classes, who were assessed proportionally; and some other burdens, such as a tax of seven per cent. on the incomes of artisans and trading citizens, exhibit less wisdom than is evinced by most of his acts. The fear of assassination and insurrection, however, disturbed his thoughts during his whole life; a complicated and efficient establishment of paid spies and informers was spread over the whole duchy; and it was forbidden to the subjects, under pain of death and confiscation, to wear arms in the city or within eight miles of its walls.†

One of the most important changes which he introduced, affected those Tuscan towns and districts which had not belonged to the ancient territory of Florence. Each of them, in its act of submission to the republic, had reserved, with more or fewer limitations, the right of administering its own funds and affairs; and no control had as yet been exercised over those provincial boards, except a very moderate one held by a commission in the metropolis. Few towns appear to have fared so ill as Siena, in which, on receiving it, the duke had indeed retained the old captain of the people, but assumed to himself the right of naming him, while for the signoria he also nominated the first set of members, appointing the body to be in future self-elected. In 1560 he placed all local administration, as well as the old local jurisdiction, directly

* Sismondi, tome xvi. p. 84. Galluzzi, Istoria del Granducato di Toscana sotto il Governo de' Medici, 5 tom. 4to, 1781; tom. i. p. 130-148.

† Galluzzi, lib. i. cap. 8, tom. i. pp. 147, 150, 387, 388.

under nine conservators; and the independence of the Tuscan communities was thus effectually abolished.*

His son and successor made himself famous by the tragical events which attended his guilty love for the Venetian girl Bianca Capello. His government at home was both cruel and unwise; while abroad he employed poisoners and assassins, to hunt out and destroy the last of the exiled Florentine republicans. At length he and his paramour, who had become his wife, were poisoned at a banquet given to them by his brother, the Cardinal Ferdinand, who, ascending the throne thus suspiciously made vacant, discharged its duties with much intelligence, and not unsuccessfully as regarded the interests of commerce.†

In the seventeenth century no notice is deserved by the personal history of the dukes, unless the bigoted folly of Cosmo III. should entitle him to form an unenviable exception. His reign, the last of the period, was also the point at which Tuscany had sunk most deeply in decay of taste, in corruption of morals, in depopulation, and in general impoverishment.‡

The Three Small Duchies.

In regard to the policy, both foreign and domestic, pursued by the Este, the Farnese, and the Gonzaga, we shall have learned enough when we regard them as having imitated, with greater or less fidelity, the more powerful states by which they were surrounded.

In 1597, on the seizure of Ferrara by the popes, Don Cesar D'Este, whose illegitimate descent had been the pretext for the dismemberment, was allowed to retain the territories of Modena and Reggio, and placed his seat of government in the former of these cities. During

* Adriani, Istoria de' Suoi Tempi, pp. 1018, 1019 (ad annum 1557); ed. 1587. Galluzzi, tom. ii. p. 213.

† Galluzzi, tom. iii. lib. v. cap. 13.

‡ Galluzzi, lib. viii. cap. 10, tom. iv. p. 390-411. Sismondi, tome xvi. p. 262-264. Perceval's History of Italy, 1825, vol. ii. p. 483.

the seventeenth century, the princes of this house were the mildest and most popular of all Italian sovereigns.

The greatest of the Farnese was Alessandro, who inherited, through his celebrated mother, no small share of the energy possessed by his grandfather Charles V. But the life of this fearless and skilful soldier was spent far from his native country, in the service of Philip II., whose armies he commanded in those wars which ended in the emancipation of the Netherlands. All his successors in the next century were distinguished either for cruel severities, or for discreditable indolence and weakness.

In 1627, on the extinction of the elder branch of the despotic and debauched Gonzaga, the disputed succession gave rise to protracted wars, which at length, through the interposition of Cardinal Richelieu, ended in giving both Mantua and Montferrat to the French dukes of Nevers, collateral descendants of the Italian house. The foreign dynasty brought with them incessant misfortune and devastation : the storm of their ducal city in 1630 was especially fatal to the older works of art ; and their personal characters were in no respect superior to those of the princes whom they had succeeded.

The Four Republics.

We must still be allowed for a time to overlook the diminutive San Marino ; and the ancient metropolis of Tuscany can scarcely receive more of our attention.

Lucca.—The new Lucchese constitution had worn at first the air of a broad democracy. All laws had to pass the ordeal of three public bodies :—the general council of ninety members, who held their places for a year ;—the senate of the thirty-six, renewed every six months ;—and the administrative board, or Signoria, changed once in two months, and composed of a gonfaloniere and nine anziani. The members of all these bodies, however, were elected by their predecessors in

office; and the Florentine refugees, who saw the government, though shifted from hand to hand, still retained by one ruling faction, bestowed on the system a contemptuous nickname, descriptive of its exclusive oligarchy. But farther, in 1556, the roll of citizens admissible to office was closed in perpetuity against all who were descended, either from foreigners or from families residing beyond the walls; and, fifty years later, the number of qualified houses amounted to no more than 168. During the seventeenth century, the history of Lucca is an absolute blank.* That period, however, with the age preceding, witnessed an interesting phenomenon, in the rise of those peasant landholders, who gradually spread over the whole territory.

Genoa.—In the revolution effected by Andrea Doria in 1528, the democracy of the old Genoese polity was entirely overturned. The new constitution ranked as citizens, equal in rights, all men of native descent who possessed property and paid taxes;—and the burghers thus franchised, were honoured with the title of Gentiluomini or Noblemen. In 1576 many parts of the system were altered by foreign mediation. Instead of the recent Council, which had contained four hundred members, renewed every year, a new one was instituted, into which every qualified citizen entered without distinction, on attaining the age of twenty-two. But the aristocratic views on which the older qualification had been fixed and managed, now appeared from its result; for the Golden Book, or roll of franchised nobles, contained only about seven hundred names. This council thenceforth elected annually a smaller one, which, containing at first 100 members, had that number afterwards doubled. The Senate or administration, composed of the Doge, eight councillors of the Signoria, and eight procurators of the Commune, was in like manner nominated by the greater council, and changed once in two years. The act of mediation, providing,

* Sismondi, tome xvi. pp. 207-210, 274.

under certain exceptions, that commerce and manufactures should be held compatible with nobility, further ordained that ten new families should be annually added to the roll; but during the whole period of modern history, the senate, when they did not openly neglect this regulation, evaded it by choosing men who were either childless, or almost paupers.*

Against this oligarchical rule, there had arisen in 1547 the unsuccessful conspiracy of Fieschi, Count of Lavagna; and in 1628 a similar insurrection was excited, with the same result, by Giulio-Cesare Vachero, a rich and haughty, but unfranchised merchant. The last public event of that age for the "proud city," was the unprovoked attack made upon it by Louis the Fourteenth.

Venice.—The annals of the constitution in Venice are already closed; for the only new measure of importance was a law of 1624, which bestowed on the Council of Ten the exclusive jurisdiction over the patricians in criminal matters. The history of the republic's wealth and foreign politics falls into two successive divisions.

Till the end of the sixteenth century her trade gradually decayed, while her wars ended in incessant defeat. In 1540 she was compelled to surrender to Sultan Soliman her islands in the Archipelago, together with her last possessions in the Morea: and the next war with the Turks was terminated in 1573, by the loss of Cyprus, the most valuable of her colonies.

During the seventeenth century commerce and manufactures declined with less rapidity; and the rulers of the commonwealth asserted its honour against foreign powers, with something not unlike the ancient spirit. Early in that age, they made a determined resistance

* Sismondi, tome xv. p. 367-374; tome xvi. pp. 210-216, 274-277. Hieronymus de Marinis De Genuensium Gubernatione, cap. 2; in Grævii Thesauro Antiq. Ital. tom. i. p. 1422-1424. The act establishing the new constitution of 1576, is given in the same volume of Grævius, p. 1471-1514.

to the claims of Paul V., and, a little later, successfully vindicated their sovereignty over the Adriatic, which the Dalmatian pirates had infested with the connivance and support of Austria. The next remarkable event was the mysterious conspiracy of 1618. One morning, in the square of St Mark, the citizens saw several gibbets, on each of which swung a dead body. At the dawn of the succeeding day, the frightful spectacle again presented itself; numerous arrests were made on board the fleet, as well as in the city, and it was known that many of the prisoners were drowned at midnight in the canals. The inquisitors and council of state, after maintaining for months an impenetrable silence, at length ordered a thanksgiving for the preservation of the commonwealth. Nothing more was ever fully discovered; but Spain was then exasperated against Venice, and the public unanimously asserted that a Spanish plot had been formed for the destruction of the city, and the massacre of the nobility.*

The latter half of the same century was distinguished by two wars against the Turks. The first was carried on in Candia during twenty-five years, and was closed in 1669, by the celebrated siege of the chief city in the island. The garrison, commanded by Francesco Morosini, who afterwards became doge, performed prodigies of valour; but at length the place was obliged to capitulate, and the province was lost. A second contest, commencing in 1684, was more successful. The commonwealth reconquered the Morea; and that province, the isles of Egina and Santa Maura, and several fortresses newly taken in Dalmatia, were secured to her in 1699 by the peace of Carlowitz.

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* Daru (tome iv. p. 388-542, lib. xxxi.) disproving the greater part of the Abbe St Real's romantic narrative, on which is founded Otway's tragedy, has substituted for it a plausibly ingenious theory of his own, to the effect that the Venetian oligarchs were themselves the plotters against Spain, and, on a threatened detection, sacrificed others to save themselves.—Compare Botta, Storia dal 1534, lib. xviii. tom. iv. p. 205-223.

The Principality of Piedmont.

The restoration of Emmanuel Philibert to his Italian dominions, constituted the most important epoch that had yet occurred in Piedmontese history. The territory of the Savoyard dukes now enlarged itself till it became a kingdom; and down to the end of the seventeenth century, nothing could be more striking than the contrast which that country, tranquil at home and honoured abroad, presented to the internal feebleness, and foreign insignificance, which were common to all the neighbouring states.

It is true, indeed, that the canker which elsewhere preyed upon Italian society, here also gnawed at the roots of morality and domestic happiness; it is true that aristocratic privileges and prejudices had here, in the subsistence of the feudal laws and customs, a field peculiarly favourable to their growth; it is true that agriculture and manufactures were checked, not only by restrictive regulations, but by the military temper of the people; it is true that the church here, as elsewhere in Italy, acted in various ways injuriously on the statistical relations of the country; and it is true, also, that the last vestiges of political representation had now entirely disappeared. But, in all these evils, except the first, there were circumstances of material alleviation.

Although the feudal nobility had acquired much of their ancient power, the effects of this misfortune were mitigated to the people by three causes. First, the barons retained their military spirit along with their seignorial rights; they communicated that warlike temper to the people; and the respect which such a national character commands, became one of the most powerful sources both of aggrandizement to the state, and of prosperity to individuals. Secondly, the sovereigns were always bent on restricting the feudal rights, in relation to the commoners as well as to the crown. Lastly, entails were brought back to the rule of the

Roman law, from which they had been borrowed; so that no such deed was valid for a longer time than four generations. As to the church again, in the course of the seventeenth century, the tithe on land entirely ceased in Piedmont, without leaving behind it commutation or any other equivalent. The communities generally bought it up by giving to the clergy lands in exchange; and the revenues of the secular ecclesiastics were derived solely from the produce of such estates added to the ordinary dues of their office. The national inclination to a military life in preference to commercial pursuits, was a fault which the princes repeatedly endeavoured to correct; but their efforts were always in vain, and could not indeed have been more than partially successful, without depriving the state of that which more than any thing else secured its honour and independence.*

In this quarter, likewise, less harm than elsewhere followed from the fall of those Parliaments, whose rise we have marked in the middle ages. In the dominions of the Savoyard princes, there had long been three provincial assemblies of this sort; those of Piedmont and Savoy, always maintained by the successive counts, and that of the county of Nice, whose preservation had been stipulated when that territory submitted itself to the lords of Western Lombardy.† The diets had survived even the turbulent opening of the sixteenth century; but the reign of Charles Emmanuel II. was destined to prove fatal to them. That prince, on attaining majority in 1648, reorganized all departments of the supreme government, establishing, in particular,

* Denina, Istoria della Italia Occidentale, tom. iii. p. 349-351; tom. iv. p. 186-189. Sismondi, tome xvi. pp. 161-163, 258-261. De Souza, in Young's Annals of Agriculture, vol. xv. Pecchio, Storia della Economia Pubblica in Italia (2da Ediz. 1832), p. 62-66.

† The convention by which, in 1388, the commissioners from the Parliament of Nice surrendered their state to Amadeus "Le Comte Rouge," is given by Guichenon, Histoire Généalogique de la Maison de Savoie; tome iv. p. 224-232 (Edit. 1780).

an administrative Council of State, for the express purpose of crippling the national assemblies. At the same time, he made trial of their temper by issuing, with the concurrence of his new council, certain proclamations, to which he required the baronial diets to interpose their sanction. The experiment succeeded; all the three provincial parliaments acknowledged the ducal Council; and the prince, satisfied that the last step might be safely taken, thenceforth ceased to issue writs for summoning them.*

The personal character of the dukes, although unable either to make their states really flourishing, or to remove that pauperism which was fast spreading among the lower classes all over Italy, had influence enough to avert rapid decay, and to maintain the several orders of the nation in a tolerably good understanding, both towards each other, and towards the sovereign. The military genius of their government was forced upon them by their geographical position, which laid their dominion open to all attacks, and made it almost necessarily the first scene of every invasion. Much of their strength, indeed, lay in a judicious use of this circumstance; a truth which Frederic of Prussia sarcastically expressed, when he said, that the possessors of Piedmont were kings by virtue of their locality.

They used their advantages with success, though not always with honour, in obtaining augmentation of territory. Emmanuel Philibert was able to do no more than rid himself of those foreign garrisons which had been planted around him by the treaty of Chateau-Cambresis. His successor, in 1601, concluded a most politic compact, by which Henry IV. of France, receiving a fertile earldom in Savoy, gave up to him the mountainous tract of Saluzzo, an acquisition worth little as a source of revenue, but invaluable as a key to the passes between Dauphiné and the valley of the Po. Henry's successors

* Guichenon, tome iii. p. 117; tome iv. pp. 591, 592. Pecchio, Storia della Economia Pubblica, pp. 64, 65.

discovered his error; and, in one of those wars into which, during the seventeenth century, Piedmont was plunged by her situation, or the occasional rashness of her princes, the French seized Pignerolo and its district, which commanded another line of Alpine defiles. This important conquest was not relinquished till 1696, when the political skill, the military genius, and the unconquerable spirit of the celebrated Victor Amadeus II., aided by his kinsman Prince Eugene, had at length tired out the persevering enmity of Louis XIV.

THIRD AGE.

FROM 1700 TO 1789.

The eighteenth century, like the sixteenth, began in Italy with fifty years of warfare; but the sufferings of the country, although often heavy, were always much lighter than those which had prevailed during the great struggle between France and the house of Charles V.

There broke out successively four European wars, into all of which the Italians were dragged by their foreign masters.

The first was that of the Spanish Succession. Charles II. of Spain, the last member of the elder branch of Austria, having died in 1699, his dominions were claimed by the Austrian Leopold, emperor of Germany, for his son, and by Louis the Fourteenth of France for his grandson. In 1713, by the Peace of Utrecht, an arrangement was made which did not prove lasting. The Bourbons, while one of their number, Philip V., received Spain, were totally excluded from Italy. The German section of the house of Austria obtained Naples, Milan, Sardinia, and the coast garrisons of Tuscany, adding to these also the duchy of Mantua, which was vacant by the death of the last Gonzaga. Victor Amadeus of Savoy, as the price of his military services, obtained the island of Sicily, with Gonzaga's principality of Montferrat, and two or three districts abstracted from the western frontier of the duchy of Milan.

But, in 1718, Cardinal Alberoni plunged Europe into the second war of the age, that of the Quadruple Alliance, whose leaders unceremoniously ejected the Duke of Savoy from Sicily, adding that province to the Italian dominions of Austria. Victor Amadeus received, in place of it, the island of Sardinia, which, to atone partially for the wrong, was erected into a kingdom.

The third war, that of the Polish Election, broke out in 1733. Two years after its commencement, the Infant Don Carlos, a younger son of the Bourbon Philip V. of Spain, by Elisabetta Farnese, a daughter of the house of Parma, mastered the Neapolitan provinces and Sicily, which he governed as king, under the name of Charles VII. The treaty of Vienna, in 1738, acknowledged his title to the joint kingdom, and this part of the allotments made by that compact stood fast.

All its other arrangements gave way in the war of the Austrian Succession, during which foreign armies desolated Italy for seven years; the Spanish, French, and Neapolitan Bourbons arraying themselves on one side, while Maria Theresa, the heir of the German house of Austria, stood singly on the other. The contest was terminated in 1748, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which established the political relations of the Italian states on a permanent footing.

The most striking peculiarity of the new distribution was the exclusion of all princes not residing in Italy. Austria, however, was excepted, which retained a very valuable and important territory; for to Maria Theresa was assigned the great duchy of Milan, in itself a kingdom, while there was added to it the smaller principality of Mantua. Naples and Sicily remained to Don Carlos, but with an obligation to preserve these provinces as an independent state, under a distinct branch of the Spanish Bourbons. The male line of the Farnese being now extinct, Don Philip, another son of Philip V., received, for himself and his descendants, the duchies of Parma and Piacenza; while with these had been recently united the small principality of Guastalla, one of those imperial

fiefs in Lombardy, which, having no real claim to the rank of sovereignty, except their holding immediately under the empire, it has seemed useless to specify in the list of Italian states. The King of Sardinia retained his new title and his old territories, to which he again added districts detached from the Milanese, carrying his possessions eastward nearly as far as their present frontier. In Tuscany, the house of the Medici became extinct in 1737; upon which, in pursuance of the usual arbitrary system of division, the duchy was given to Maria Theresa's husband, the Duke of Lorraine, who soon afterwards was elected Emperor of Germany, and took the title of Francis I. The treaty of Vienna bound him to form his Tuscan possessions into an independent sovereignty for one of the members of his family; but he did not fulfil this engagement till his death in 1765, when he bequeathed them to his second son, Peter Leopold. The Este, sole survivors in that splendid group of princely houses which had ruled Upper Italy during the middle ages, were allowed to continue dukes of Modena and Reggio, and to hold also the fief of Mirandola, recently purchased from the emperor, and Massa-Carrara, acquired by marriage. The Papal States were not touched; and the four republics had their independence guaranteed.

Between the date of that treaty and the first invasion by the armies of the French republic, there intervened a period of forty-four years, during which no war crossed the frontiers of Italy. Over all her provinces, except the decayed commonwealths and the Austrian dukedoms in the north, there reigned princes who dwelt in the midst of their subjects, and whose families soon became Italians in birth, education, and character. Political institutions, it is true, were every where imperfect, nowhere free, and in more than one state incurably bad; but several of the men who administered them were benevolent as well as able, and in some quarters there appeared a spirit of active, searching, and enlightened reform.

The Kingdom of Naples and Sicily.

The first king of the new dynasty governed Lower Italy till 1759, when, by the death of his elder brother, he succeeded to the throne of Spain, and abdicated that of the Sicilies in favour of his second son Ferdinand, then a boy in his tenth year. Don Carlos, though indolent and ignorant, was a kind and well-disposed prince, who, even if he had possessed no higher merit, would have deserved the gratitude of his people for the discernment he usually displayed in the choice of his counsellors. His most confidential adviser was Tanucci, whom he had raised to a marquisate from a professor's chair at Pisa; and, assisted by this able and excellent but somewhat timid man, he struggled long, though with little success, in advancing the two projects which the minister and his philosophical friends had most deeply at heart,—the improvement of national education, and the suppression of the feudal privileges that belonged to the nobility. Those who judge of measures by their results, have censured Don Carlos severely for neglecting the military force and fortifications of his kingdom, in which he maintained no standing army, and a militia of no more than 25,000 men, doing duty for fifteen days annually.

Still heavier blame must rest on him, if he is to be held responsible for the neglected education of his son and successor Ferdinand. This unfortunate prince, who lived to be, with the exception of his own elder brother, the most contemptible sovereign in Christendom, seems to have originally wanted neither goodness of heart nor a moderate share of ability. But, after attaining manhood, ignorant, selfish, and unfit for all business, he spent his time in hunting and fishing; and it would have been well for his subjects if he had through life enjoyed the benefit of that guardianship which for many years his father exercised over him, and which enabled Tanucci to complete many most necessary changes. In 1777, however, a misunderstanding with the old king compelled the

minister to retire from public life; and within a year or two, Ferdinand's wife, the haughty and energetic Caroline of Austria, had contrived to place the whole power of the kingdom in the hands of her foreign favourite, Sir John Acton, under whom almost all the late reforms were either repealed or allowed to remain inoperative. We must not therefore be surprised if Neapolitan society and government, near the close of the eighteenth century, be found to present a picture every way discouraging.*

There is no temptation, in the mean time, to review the state of things in Sicily, which was just a bad copy of the abuses prevalent on the mainland. The viceroyalty of the Marquis Caraccioli indeed remedied many of the feudal evils, and improved the constitution of that Committee of twelve, which, under the name of the Deputation, nominally performed the duties of the parliament in the intervals between its sessions. But internal jealousies crippled his efforts at the time, and changes soon supervened which utterly annihilated their effects.†

The king taxed and governed Lower Italy according to his uncontrolled pleasure; and of the old representative system there survived no trace, except the division of the provinces into Communes, in every one of which the tax-payers elected annually a Syndic, and two other officers called Eletti. Although this communal board nominally administered the public funds of the district, it could take no step without a warrant from the Chamber of the Sommaria, a royal commission fixed at Naples, and administering, under the supreme Council of Finance, all revenues of the kingdom, local as well as general.

There were two privileged orders; the nobles and the ecclesiastics. On the mainland, in 1799, the latter class contained about 100,000 members; and a few years

* Orloff, Mémoires, tome iii. chap. ix. p. 143-206. Botta, Storia dal 1789, lib. i. Colletta, lib. i. cap. 3, 4; lib. ii. cap. 1, 2; lib. vii. cap. 2, sect. 30-34. Pecchio, p. 480-483.

† Botta, Storia dal 1534, lib. l. tom. x. p. 216-222.

earlier the number was probably much greater. Perhaps the half were secular priests, and the rest monks, friars, and nuns. It was estimated that, from lands and the offerings of the laity taken together, the church possessed an annual income of little less than forty millions of francs, or £1,583,000, which would make nearly eight francs and a half as the average sum paid by every inhabitant. The immunities of the nobles, again, were founded on this fact, that nearly all the lands in the kingdom were held under feudal titles. Almost all these seignorial manors belonged to the nobility, who, to the number of about 6000 families, derived their revenues exclusively from them.

In the first place, then, there resulted from the position of both these privileged classes a gross inequality in the administration of justice. The royal tribunals, indeed, from which alone equitable or systematic procedure was to be expected, had recently been increased in number and otherwise much improved; but they were obstructed at every step by the baronial courts, which asserted most extensive rights of jurisdiction. The church also claimed its ancient benefit of clergy; and all the concordats with the court of Rome left much of this abuse. The laws were an unwieldy and incomprehensible chaos, borrowing conflicting elements from the jurisprudence of every nation that had governed the provinces since the invasion of the republican Romans. And, after all the reforms, the constitution and practice even of the king's courts were monstrously defective. Not only did they present a complicated series of jurisdictions, facilitating endless litigation, but the judges usually constituted the same boards which directed the administration and the police; and, while the forms of civil process were tedious and expensive, the criminal procedure was irresponsible and secret.*

In the next place, the unfairness of taxation was an

* This description falls greatly short of the picture of abuses drawn, under the eye of the minister, by Filangieri; Scienza della Legislazione, tom. ii. p. 408-423; edit. Filadelfia, 1819.

evil not less enormous. The sum raised by the government from the nation amounted annually to 14,400,000 ducats, of which the barons contributed no more than 268,000, and the clergy, it is probable, not a much larger proportion. This shameful inequality can, to a considerable extent, be readily accounted for. Keeping out of view the government monopolies and other less important branches of revenue, which, though equally oppressive, are not included in the estimate, we find the principal burdens to have been of three kinds,—the Donatives granted by the municipal seggi, the Direct Taxes, and the Indirect. The donatives had long fallen almost wholly into disuse, and were asked only twice during the whole reign of Ferdinand. The direct taxes were levied in the following manner. An aggregate sum was assessed on every commune, each being rated according to its supposed number of hearths or households; but an imperfect census of 1737 was the rule for the estimate. The communal councils made up the amount by exactions of three kinds,—a capitation-tax, a tax on artisans, and a land-tax. From the two former were exempted all ecclesiastics, the barons, persons of the liberal professions, and, in short, every one who took rank as a gentleman. From the land-tax were exempted, some wholly and some partially, the estates held feudally by the nobles: the lands of the parochial clergy and the hospitals were exempted altogether; the lands of the monastic orders, which had formerly enjoyed a like immunity, lost it in 1741, but still paid no more than one half. The land-tax, thus falling on a few unfortunate individuals, produced every year 2,819,500 ducats, besides an assessment of 290,000 for roads and bridges. The indirect taxes, or duties on articles of consumption, were apparently the fairest of all; but, from the severity with which they were laid on every-day necessaries, they cruelly discouraged the poorer classes; and, though this worst part of the Spanish system was greatly amended by the Bourbons, an effectual reform was made impossible by the financial embarrassments of the crown.

The relation of the vassals towards their feudal superiors was yet more unfavourable than their position as citizens of the state. In the domanial fiefs of the crown, indeed, the seignorial privileges were sparingly claimed; and accordingly, in such towns and lands, but in no others, was a small amount of prosperity to be found. In the baronial manors, the duties and services, pecuniary, personal, and in kind, were multiplied with all the ingenuity of the middle ages; and the varieties of them were said to amount in 1806 to thirteen hundred and ninety-five. The duties claimed in money or produce were very dissimilar for different baronies both in nature and quantity, but in all districts they embraced almost every conceivable branch of industry, and their amount was generally exorbitant. The least favourable charters held by any baron did not burden his lands with duties to the crown exceeding seven per cent. on their revenue; whereas those granted by the barons to their vassals scarcely ever imposed duties falling short of twenty per cent., while many stipulated forty or fifty, and some sixty. The personal burdens were yet more harassing, and comprehended agricultural labour by the vassals on the superior's lands, service as couriers, or in the baron's household, and numerous other antiquated relics of bondage. On many manors, however, these personal obligations were commuted for annual payments in money. Another evil, yet more general in its destructive consequences to agriculture, arose from those large tracts of common which existed on most baronies. Not only were these continual sources of dispute, and of themselves powerful obstacles to rural improvement, but the rights arising out of them were protected by foolish enactments which peremptorily prohibited enclosures.*

The laws which favoured the nobility so much in certain respects acted against them in another particular, which most of them however did not see in that light. Unlimited facilities were given to destinations of lands

* Filangieri, Scienza della Legislazione, tom. i. p. 329-332.

in perpetuity ;—and there thus arose evils of which we should form but a faint image, if we supposed a whole country to be divided into estates held under the closest of our Scottish entails, without any of those restrictions which our legislature has imposed for the protection of the possessor's family and creditors. A noble house in Naples, and indeed throughout Italy, during the eighteenth century, consisted usually of a head whose income was pledged in advance, and who could not sell an acre of land either to pay his debts or portion his children ; of an heir brought up in sloth and ignorance, to lead the same life of discomfort which his father led before him ; of uncles, nephews, or younger brothers, who lived in beggary on scanty allowances, or received the money of the state for services which they were incompetent to perform ; and of portionless aunts, sisters, or nieces, who, if they did not speedily find husbands, were driven into cloisters as nuns.

The States of the Church.

On the outline of government and policy in the ecclesiastical state, as these features presented themselves in the seventeenth century, very little has to be either altered or added, if we would make the picture true for the age that succeeded. It is necessary indeed to pay, at the outset, that tribute of respect which is deserved by the personal character of most of the sovereigns who ruled on the seven hills during the eighteenth century. Never had the bishops of Rome been so decorous, so generally unexceptionable in morals ; seldom had they numbered so many men of sincere and earnest piety ; never had the list included names more illustrious for talent and learning. Two popes in particular, Prospero Lambertini and the accomplished Antonio Ganganelli, would have reflected honour upon any throne in Christendom.

But those venerable priests, who, for a few years before they sank into the grave, left the altar and the closet, the breviary and the pen, to wear the triple crown and wield the keys of Saint Peter, discovered

by sad experience, what every one who has administered that office must have discovered before he had slept a month under the roof of the Vatican. Genius becomes a public calamity, virtue itself is paralysed into despair, when, after a lifetime spent in the library or the cloister, they are summoned, in the decrepitude of old age, to discharge duties more complicated, more difficult, requiring greater versatility and greater energy in action, than those which belong to any other sovereignty in the world. Where the whole edifice of government must be overturned before effectual repair can be wrought upon any of its parts, differences in the character of successive rulers are confined in their results to individual and temporary interests. In regard to the permanent improvement or deterioration of the state, Rodrigo Borgia was as innocent as the irreproachable Barnaba Chiaramonti; Clement the Seventh was as wise as Sixtus the Fifth; and the hermit-pope Pietro of Morrona, with his gentle and pious ignorance, was not more helpless than Julian della Rovere, who wore armour beneath his sacerdotal robe.

The most unpleasing task which the popes of the eighteenth century had to perform, was that of accommodating their prerogatives over the Catholic states to those opinions of independence which were now rooted in every cabinet of Europe. The priestly chiefs bowed with infinite reluctance to this hard necessity; some of them disgraced themselves by persecuting foreign inquirers, like Giannone and Genovesi; and, but for the activity and talent of Clement XIV., who yielded gracefully what he had no power to withhold, the papal court might have suffered losses infinitely more injurious than the sacrifice which it was obliged to make of its able servants the Jesuits.

Pius VI., on whose head were to break the thunders of the French Revolution, was more a man of the world than any of his recent predecessors. Long employed in offices of the government, and familiar in an especial degree with the business of the Roman ex-

chequer, he distinguished himself by endeavours zealous and incessant, but utterly unsuccessful, to introduce internal ameliorations. The sluggish imbecility of the papal rule cannot be better proved than by the fact that, till the middle of the eighteenth century, while internal taxes and restrictions ground the faces of the people, there was no duty (though, at several points of time, there were absolute prohibitions) on the importation of foreign manufactures; and that one of the most vaunted measures of this reign was the organization of a force to protect the frontiers against smuggling; a measure of which, amidst all their recent tariffs, the popes do not appear to have ever dreamed.*

In the details of his new system of foreign duties on merchandise, as well as in many of his regulations for agriculture and internal trade, Pius and his advisers proved singularly how much they were still in the dark as to the principles of political economy. His partial abolition of the innumerable baronial tolls, did not confer benefits half sufficient to counterbalance the evils produced by his arbitrary restrictions on the corn-trade; his expensive operations for draining the Pontine Marshes, were rendered useless by his gift of the reclaimed lands to his nephew; and his depreciation of the currency by excessive issues of paper money, was an anticipation of one of the worst errors committed by the leaders of the French Revolution.

The Sardinian Kingdom.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century, the counts of Savoy were precluded from prosecuting farther that policy which had gained for them an extensive dominion and a kingly name. But, even amidst the wars which had preceded this period, and still more energetically after their close, the able and ambitious Victor Amadeus continued that system of internal im-

* Vergani, Sistema di Finanza dello Stato Pontificio, Roma 1794, pp. 33-53, 56, 62, &c.

provement, to whose results he looked forward as likely to make him the sovereign of a people rich as well as warlike, rivals of their southern neighbours in literature and art, as they had already outstripped them in energy and public spirit.*

In his endeavours for the intellectual improvement of the higher ranks (for whom exclusively his institutions were designed), he succeeded as ill as an arbitrary king may be expected to succeed when he aims at amending a corrupted, martial, and ignorant aristocracy. For commerce he was able to effect greatly more, through those regulations imposed on the silk-manufacture, which, however alien their narrow spirit may be to the genuine principles of commerce, were found to be not ill-calculated to check an equally narrow spirit abroad, and were accordingly imitated in Milan and the eastern provinces. Several excellent laws aided the rural population. One enactment expressly recognised, in contradiction to all older practice, agricultural leases for a fixed term of years, usually from nine to eighteen; and not only so, but the lawgivers studiously left loopholes for evading a rule which they were obliged in terms to enact, for making the endurance of such leases dependent on the survivance of the landlord who had granted them. This characteristic artifice shows the influence of the higher classes, against whom however Victor Amadeus carried by arbitrary interference his great and beneficial measure for an equalization of public burdens. For, before he abdicated the throne, all the estates in Piedmont, without distinction of tenure, were subjected to an impartial land-tax, assessed in conformity to a general valuation, which likewise furnished the materials for levying all local

* Denina, Italia Occidentale, tom. iv. p. 186-189. Sismondi, tome xvi. p. 300. De Souza, Annals of Agriculture, vol. xv. Muratori, Annali d' Italia, tom. xii. p. 165 (ad annum 1730). Botta, Storia dal 1534, lib. xxxviii. tom. viii. pp. 115-130, 147. Bossi, Della Storia d' Italia Antica e Moderna, lib. vi. cap. 5, tom. xix. p. 162: ed. Milan, 19 tom. 1819-1823. Perceval, vol. ii. p. 582.

burdens on the communes, such as those for roads, schools, and costs of administration.

When we add such improvements as these to the changes which we perceived to be in progress during the seventeenth century, we shall wonder, if we learn nothing more, how it should have happened that the subjects of this kingdom were not only the first to throw themselves into the arms of the revolutionary French, but have since complained of their government more bitterly than any other Italians. It is not difficult to find the reasons. All the reforms of the Piedmontese princes were made for their own ends, not for the sake of the people, who were kept peremptorily in subjection to the king, and left in total dependence on his character for their share of individual comfort; the nobles, likewise, being disarmed as well as the commonalty, the crown was freed from the only check on its conduct; and bitter discontents arose both from that abject submission to the priesthood, and from that childish fear of change, which for the last few generations have distinguished the princes. But, at the same time, amidst the innovations which were introduced after the middle of the seventeenth century, it had been found expedient to conciliate the alarmed aristocracy by leaving its members in possession of many personal and empty, yet invidious privileges; and the consequence was, a haughtiness on the part of the upper ranks met by sullen defiance among the multitude, a mutual mistrust among all orders, ready to kindle into deadly hatred.

Charles Emmanuel III., notorious in the early years of his reign for his ingratitude towards a father who had resigned the throne in his favour, was more creditably distinguished in later life by his endeavours to reconcile the conflicting wishes of the different orders of society, and to purify completely the administration of justice. His nobles complained of the number of commoners whom he promoted to public posts: the suitors in the courts of law marvelled at the conduct of a king who so

far distrusted his own judgment, and so far honoured the judicial servants of his crown, as to refuse granting any briefs of dispensation from judicial sentences, unless after consultation with the judges by whom the decision had been pronounced. He was less prudent in his management of the military force, which he weakened greatly by the promotion of inefficient officers, the nobility being always preferred, and a commoner finding it all but impossible to rise to high rank. This abuse became greatly more flagrant in the reign of his successor, who gave the last impulse to the growing discontent of his subjects, by his superstitious subservience to confessors and bigots, and not less by increasing his army to an unreasonable size, and taxing the people severely for its pay and subsistence.*

Sardinia, rude, poor, and lawless, like other provinces of Spain, was little improved by its new sovereign, Victor Amadeus I. In his son, however, it found the best ruler it had seen for ages. Much was done by him to weaken feudalism, encourage agriculture, and extirpate the bands of robbers; two universities were founded, and the inferior schools somewhat improved; and the year 1738 was a remarkable epoch in the island, from the reforms which it witnessed in every department.†

The Duchies of Parma and Modena.

Neither of these petty states will detain us more than a moment.

The rule of the Bourbons, Don Philip and his son Ferdinand, in the duchies of Parma and Piacenza, was distinguished by little except the facilities which the latter, educated by Condillac and passionately fond of French literature, gave for the dissemination of those

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* Denina, Italia Occidentale, tom. v. pp. 23-26, 65-66, 78-80. Botta, Storia dal 1534, lib. xlviii. tom. x. p. 99-108. Botta, Storia dal 1789, lib. i. tom. i. p. 45-48.

† Botta, Storia dal 1534, lib. xli. tom. viii. p. 365-373; lib. xlviii. tom. x. p. 92-98.

philosophical opinions which soon became practical rules for the Italians. One of the most humiliating acts which Clement XIV. had to perform on his accession, was the rescinding of violent bulls issued by his predecessor against Duke Ferdinand, who had annulled the judicial benefit of clergy, restricted the power of the church in the acquisition of property, and taxed its lands like those of laymen.*

Ercole III. of Modena, the last male head of the house of Este, was an object of peculiar interest to the French invaders in the end of the century, on account of those treasures which he had accumulated amidst the murmurs of his subjects. It is, however, somewhat uncertain, how far the discontent may not have originated with persons deprived of unjust advantages by a general valuation of the provinces, which the duke caused to be made in order to establish an equitable assessment of the land-tax.† Elective municipal boards were to be found throughout the whole duchy: but not only were these, in the larger towns at least, monopolized by the nobles, but their powers of every kind were dependent for validity on the approval of the sovereign; and in the administration of the municipal funds the councils could not depart, in any particular, from a scheme which they had made up at the beginning of the year, and submitted to the ducal Council of Economy at Modena.‡

The Four Republics.

Lucca.—The history of this city offers no fact worthy of being mentioned. Its oligarchy grew more and more exclusive, and the peasant landholders in its rural districts became impoverished through the excessive division of property by succession.

San Marino.—This miniature republic had retreated

* Botta, Storia dal 1534, lib. xlvii. tom. ix. p. 432-457. Desodoards, Histoire d' Italie, 1803, tome vii. p. 462-468.

† Desodoards, tome vii. p. 350.

‡ Gorani, Mémoires Secrets de l'Italie, tome iii. p. 255-259.

into its wonted obscurity since 1739, when the fallen intriguer, Cardinal Alberoni, then papal legate in Romagna, repeated at its expense that treachery by which he had formerly convulsed all Europe. Alleging that the government of San Marino had become a narrow oligarchy, which was true but did not justify his interference, he conquered its territory with a single company of soldiers and a few officers of police. The people appealed to Clement XII., who ordered them to determine their own fate in a general meeting: they unanimously voted against submission to the church, and the papal troops were withdrawn.

Genoa.—In 1746, the Genoese commonalty, unsupported by the nobles, showed, in their expulsion of the Austrians, a spirit worthy of their fathers. With this bold insurrection the history of the republic closes for half a century. In 1718 it had increased its territory, by purchasing the imperial fief of Finale; but within a few years it lost Corsica.

The revolted Corsicans allowed their country to be formed into a mock kingdom in 1736, by the foolish ambition of Theodore von Neuhof, a German baron; and, after they had been deserted by him, they continued to resist the united forces brought against them by the Genoese and Louis XV. of France. The islanders now established a republic, which, from 1755, was headed by the celebrated Pasquale Paoli: and the contest for freedom was maintained manfully till Genoa, tired of an expensive war, and deeply indebted to France, ceded Corsica to that power on receiving an acquittance. Louis renewed the attack with increased vigour, and the besieged republicans resisted bravely till the struggle became utterly hopeless. Paoli emigrated to England, and the island became a French province in 1768, the year before it gave birth to Napoleon Buonaparte.

Venice.—The commerce of Venice was nearly at an end; her manufactures were insignificant; her flag was insulted on her own Adriatic by every power of Europe. She still, however, possessed an Italian territory, peopled

by two millions and a half of subjects; her Dalmatian and Albanian provinces and the Ionian Isles had half a million more. Her taxes had been nearly doubled in the eighteenth century, and amounted, in 1789, to about 11,600,000 ducats (£1,919,800); her public credit was bad; and her debt was 44,000,000 ducats (£7,283,300).

The gloomy government remained unchanged. The Council of Ten had resisted frequent attempts to overturn it: an attack in 1761 was checked by arrests and imprisonments in monasteries; and the Ten and the Three still exercised, though more cautiously than before, their singular functions. Their spies cost annually, in the eighteenth century, about 200,000 ducats; and more than one secret execution was laid to their charge. But licentiousness was more prevalent than cruelty; infamous women were pensioned as informers by the state; and in the public gaming-houses, amidst the masked gamesters, senators, officially appointed, presided undisguised.

In 1768, the nobles, displeased with the church, named a commission to inquire into the state of its revenues. The report, which is still extant, is curious.* The commissioners estimate the gross income at 4,274,460 ducats (£719,100).† Of this sum, 2,734,807 ducats were permanent, being derived from lands, money invested, or perpetual rents. The remainder was casual, being made up of the alms bestowed on the mendicant orders, and of the prices paid for temporary masses. The whole number of masses for which the clergy received payment was prodigious, being not less than 8,938,459. Of these the parochial and other secular clergymen celebrated 4,250,060; the monastic orders celebrated the rest, being 4,688,399, of which 3,107,682

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* It is given at full length by Daru, tome vii. p. 161-168.

† Daru, however (tome v p. 325), reckoning the total number of the Venetian clergy, in 1768, at 45,773, observes truly, that the reported revenues give, as the average annual allowance for each member, little more than 93 ducats, or between £15 and £16.

were masses on perpetual foundations. On the latter class the Venetian commissioners sarcastically remark, that the whole number of the monks and friars was 7638, of whom only 3272 were in priests' orders, and entitled to say mass; and that, consequently, if the monks performed all the masses for which they took payment, each of their priests would have to officiate fourteen or fifteen hundred times a-year. There followed on the report some ecclesiastical reforms, the chief of which was, that the mendicant orders were at first prohibited from receiving novices, and afterwards restricted in their admission to an extent which, before the revolution, had reduced them to a fraction of their former numbers.

The Austrian Princes in Lombardy and Tuscany.

For seventeen years after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the duchies of Milan and Mantua, forming one province, and the grand-duchy of Tuscany as another, were governed by viceroys appointed by Maria-Theresa and her husband Francis. On the emperor's death in 1765, the two Lombard duchies continued to constitute a province of the empire under his son Joseph II.; but Tuscany was formed into an independent sovereignty for Peter Leopold, the new emperor's younger brother. All these sovereigns were remarkable persons: the sons were worthy of their heroic mother; and Leopold, free from that ambition which stained the names of Maria-Theresa and Joseph with the infamous partition of Poland, was one of the greatest men that ever filled a throne.

The statistical results of this period were highly pleasing. Austrian Lombardy, at length enabled to profit in some measure by its singular physical advantages, was, in 1790, by far the most flourishing province of Italy; while Tuscany also was prosperous, and in some respects more decidedly so than Joseph's duchies. The institutions of both states were wonderfully improved; and the history of these changes is one of the most interesting pages in the annals of modern Italy.

The Duchies of Milan and Mantua.—That the long servitude of the Italians had ruined their character as well as their national resources, could not have been more clearly proved than by the bitter opposition with which they met all the reforms introduced by their new masters. There was hardly an improvement of any importance, especially in Lombardy, that was not absolutely forced upon the natives; and the most sweeping changes were skilfully evaded, some of them during more than a generation. Much of this delay was attributable to the wonted slowness of the Austrian court; but much also was produced by the passive resistance of the people.

The great system of administration, the first draught of which had been laid before the empress in 1739, did not come into activity till 1755, and its introduction makes that year an important epoch for Northern Italy.*

A few only of the features which distinguished the plan of taxation can be here described. One of the worst evils to be removed was the subdivision of the state into seven districts, each of which, like a separate kingdom, had its duties on mercantile imports, exports, and transits. This abuse was swept away by a single stroke of the pen; and similar restrictions on agricultural produce shared the same fate. The excise was subjected to good regulations, and the customs based on principles as fair as any that then prevailed in Europe. Lastly, a new survey and valuation formed the rule for an equitable assessment of the land-tax. A dispassionate and well-qualified judge was able to find in the system but four serious defects;—an insufficient check on the land-valuators; the retention of the unwise mercantile-tax; the imposition of a capitation-tax on the peasantry and others who paid no land-tax; and the permission to the church, which possessed a third of the lands in the state, and had till

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* Verri, Economia Pubblica di Milano, sect. 7, 8, 9. Carli, Censimento di Milano, parte ii. iii. Pecchio, p. 474-476.

now paid no taxes for them, to retain too many of its Spanish privileges.*

But the portion of the plan that most interests us is the Administrative, which, as we shall hereafter discover, is the basis of the arrangements adopted at the present day. In the general government, the obnoxious senate was retained, and formed a very injurious barrier between the subjects and the throne, generating petty cabals, and assisting in keeping up that tendency to secrecy and plotting which had been triumphant under the Spaniards. In the provincial government, the leading principle was, to subject every thing in the last instance to the control of the boards of administration at Milan, while the immediate administration of every province was put under a Delegate appointed by the sovereign; although, at the same time, a considerable part of the actual management was consigned to a Provincial Council established in every chief city. The local statutes of the old republics or petty principalities, which it was not in all cases considered safe to touch, created many diversities in the execution of this plan; but the general rule was, to introduce in the provincial councils members of three orders:—the representatives of the cities, who were nobles, and elected by their own class in each town; the representatives elected by the landholders of the province; and the mercantile men who represented, and were elected by, the corporation of merchants. The council so formed, devolved its ordinary powers on a committee of its own body, called the Prefects of Government.

Communal Councils were also instituted, according to regulations laid down in a prolix code. Each of them administered the patrimony of the commune, under the presidency of a Chancellor appointed by the sovereign. Their own members were five for each commune:—three representatives of the landholders, one representative of the mercantile body, and one representative of

* Verri, Economia Pubblica di Milano, sect. 8.

those who were subject to the capitation-tax. They were elected annually in a meeting of all the landholders rated on the books for the land-tax; soldiers and churchmen, however, being ineligible. The same constituency also elected the Consul, who was an inferior criminal judge, and the Syndic, who had dignity without any real duties.

Joseph, seconded by his excellent viceroy Count Firmian, under whom served Verri, Carli, Neri, and other enlightened Italians, followed out the plan of amelioration which had been thus delineated for him. He improved the courts of justice, and the judicial procedure, especially in criminal causes, abolishing, at the suggestion of Beccaria, torture and secret trials. He annulled or diminished the most vexatious of the feudal privileges, and imposed checks on the perpetual destination of estates. He patronized agriculture, and extended commerce and manufactures by the construction of roads, as well as by the abolition of some remaining imposts and restrictions. When the death of his mother, in 1780, freed him from her remonstrances on ecclesiastical matters, he commenced with his accustomed impetuosity a series of changes in that department, which Pius VI. considered so dangerous, that he made a fruitless journey to Vienna in the hope of procuring their repeal. The most material of those measures were the following:—All dissenters were to enjoy toleration; the bishops were forbidden, as they had already been forbidden by other princes, to act upon any papal bull but such as should be transmitted to them by the government; the monastic clergy were declared to be dependent, not on the General of their order who lived in Rome, but directly on the resident bishop of the diocese within which their cloister was situated; lastly, all nunneries were suppressed, except those which pledged themselves to occupy their members in the education of the young.

The emperor's death interrupted the consolidation of his famous system for giving uniformity to his system of government throughout all the Austrian dominions. The decree of 1786, which promulgated this new consti-

tution, divided the Italian provinces into eight circles, in each of which the local administration was to be vested in a chamber closely dependent upon the government. This departure from the late arrangement created in Lombardy universal discontent.*

Sometimes unjust and cruel, often misjudging and imprudent, always headstrong, passionate, and despotic, doing good to his subjects by force, and punishing as ungrateful all who refused to be thus benefited, Joseph was an unconscious instrument in the hand of Providence for advancing in Southern Europe the great revolution of his time. One inveterate evil was extirpated, that another might be substituted for it, which, being less deeply rooted, was destined in its turn to wither and die away. "At length," said a noble-minded Italian in the last stage of the emperor's reign, "the obstacles which hindered the happiness of nations, have mainly disappeared. Over the greater part of Europe despotism has banished feudal anarchy; and the manners and spirit of the times have already weakened despotism."

The Grand-duchy of Tuscany.—The reforms in Tuscany went infinitely farther than those of Joseph and his mother in the provinces of the Po. They were commenced during the life of Francis, by the Prince of Craon, his viceroy at Florence; and the plan was formed, even thus early, for consolidating into one common code all those contradictory laws which, subsisting in the old Tuscan communities, had been maintained since the subjection of all to the duchy. But it was reserved for younger hands to construct this noble edifice.†

Till we reflect that Leopold's scheme of legislation for Tuscany was devised and executed long before that change of opinions, which the French Revolution diffused

* Coxe's Memoirs of the House of Austria, vol. ii. p. 573-579. Desodoards, Histoire d' Italie, tome vii. p. 354-358.

† Memorie per servire alla Vita di Leopoldo II. Imperatore de' Romani; Italia, 1792. Sismondi, tome xvi. p. 325-327. Botta. Storia dal 1789, lib. i. Pecchio, p. 477-479 Perceval's History of Italy, vol. ii. p. 588-591. Bossi, lib. vi. cap. 17, tom. xix. p. 563-567.

through the whole of Europe, we are not fully aware how very far he stood in advance of his age. In his new code the criminal section was especially bold, inasmuch as it swept away at once torture, confiscation, secret trial, and even the punishment of death. Imprisonment for debt, forbidden by one of his laws unless the claim exceeded a certain amount, was afterwards abolished altogether.* All privileged jurisdictions were destroyed, and the public courts fortified in their independence and authority. Restrictions on agriculture were totally removed; and large tracts of common were brought into cultivation, by being divided among poor peasants in property, subject only to a small crown-rent. The grand-duke discontinued the ruinous system of farming out the taxes; he diminished their amount, and abandoned most of the government-monopolies. Notwithstanding, he was able, before he left Italy, to pay off the greater part of a large national debt; for, under his new system, and especially through the absolute freedom which he allowed to commerce, industry flourished so wonderfully, that his revenue suffered hardly any diminution.

Leopold's ecclesiastical reforms were equally daring, and gave deep offence to the papal government. They were chiefly designed for improving the condition of the parochial clergy, and for curbing the monastic orders. He suppressed the Inquisition; he imposed severe limitations on the profession of monks and nuns; he made the regular clergy dependent, not merely (as his brother had done) on their bishop, but directly on the priest of the parish; he taxed church-lands like those belonging to laymen; he even seized arbitrarily several large estates which had been destined to useless ecclesiastical purposes, and applied their proceeds towards increasing the insufficient incomes of the priests in rural parishes. This step, as well as several others, formed parts of his great scheme against tithes, of which he gradually introduced a general commutation.†

* Memorie per la Vita di Leopoldo, pp. 154, 194.
† Vita di Leopoldo, pp. 137, 205, 212, 221.

In the system which this great man enforced there were unquestionably many defects. There was something (though not much) of his brother's hasty disregard for obstacles arising from foreign quarters; a fault which made his scheme of free trade in some respects injurious to his subjects, and forced him in his later years to resume a few restrictions. There was a disposition to overstrain the principles of reform, manifested when he totally abolished trading corporations, or when, in the last year of our period, he annulled at a blow all rights of primogeniture, and all substitutions in succession to land. There was a jealous watchfulness over details, a temper exceedingly useful but very irritating, which displayed itself with equal force in the severe system of police, and in the curious circular letter which he addressed to the nobles, requesting that their ladies might be made to dress more economically. There was some fickleness of purpose, though much less than those have believed, who forget the existence of that chaos of local laws and privileges, through which he had for years to pilot his way, embarrassed, misled, and thwarted at every step.

Lastly, there were two absolute wants. Leopold did not, because in a single generation he could not, renovate the heart and mind of his people; and therefore the degenerate Florentines murmured at his strictness of rule, and ridiculed his personal peculiarities. He did not give to his subjects a representative constitution; and therefore his fabric of beneficent legislation crumbled into fragments the moment his hand ceased to support its weight.

It is said, indeed, that he had sketched a constitution before he left Tuscany;* but, at all events, his reforms in the local administration went very far towards this

* A detailed account of the alleged constitution is given by Potter, on the authority of the senator Gianni: Vie de Scipion de Ricci, tome iii. p. 355-407, Append. No. 2; ed. Bruxelles, 1826. But see Botta, Storia dal 1534, lib. l. tom. x. p. 225-236.

great end. His purpose, in which, as in so much besides, he was obstructed by a multiplicity of special statutes and customs, was to introduce over the duchy one uniform system of municipal government, embracing all districts, rural as well as urban. During his whole reign, step after step led him towards this result, by organizing new Communal Councils in various provinces, which had at length comprehended nearly the whole state. At the same time there was extended to the new boards the privilege conferred first on those in the Florentine territory, of managing their local patrimony as of old, without dependence upon the supreme government. The polity of Alessandro de' Medici, which still prevailed in Florence, was annulled in 1781 ; and the elective board which administered the affairs of the city thenceforth consisted of a gonfaloniere as president, eleven priors, and twenty councillors.*

* Vita di Leopoldo, pp. 52, 132, 144, 150, 152, 166, 188, 228.

CHAPTER II.

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Literature, Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture.

A. D. 1500—A. D. 1600.

LITERATURE—Learning—CHIVALROUS POEMS—*Ariosto*—The Orlando Furioso—*Berni*—His Poem—*Bernardo Tasso*—The Amadigi—*Torquato Tasso*—His Life—The Gierusalemme Liberata—THE DRAMA—*Tragedies*—Trissino—Tasso—Giraldi—*Comedies*—Bibbiena—Ariosto—Pietro Aretino—*Pastorals*—Tasso—Guarini—Operas—POEMS SATIRICAL, DIDACTIC, AND LYRICAL—Ariosto—Berni—Tasso—Vittoria—Michel Angelo—PROSE LITERATURE—Machiavelli's Works—Guicciardini—Other Historians—Science—Novelists—PAINTING—MICHEL ANGELO—Easel Paintings—*The Sistine Frescoes*—The Old Testament—The Last Judgment—RAFFAELLE—His Early Works—*Frescoes in the Vatican*—The Pictures of the Four Chambers—The Loggie—*The Tapestries*—The Seven Cartoons—*Sketches*—Marcantonio—*Oil-paintings*—Masterpieces—THE ROMAN AND FLORENTINE SCHOOLS—*Raffaellists*—Giulio Romano—*Tuscans*—Bartolommeo—Andrea—Mannerists—*New Schools in Rome*—Mannerism—Revival—TITIAN AND THE VENETIANS—*Giorgione*—His Genius—*Titian*—His Masterpieces—*Tintoretto*—His Energy—*Paolo and Bassano*—Their Characteristics—CORREGGIO — Oil-paintings — Frescoes — Parmigianino — SCULPTURE—MICHEL ANGELO—Early Pieces—The Three Great Works—*Minor Names*—Sansovino—Bandinelli—Cellini—Ammanato—Giovanni Bologna—ARCHITECTURE—IN ROME—Bramanto—Peruzzi—Raffaelle—Michel Angelo—Sangallo—Vignola—Ammanato—IN THE NORTH—Sanmichele—Sansovino—Palladio—His Style—His Followers.

THE sixteenth century has been called the golden age of Italian intellect; and the era that gave birth to Ariosto and Tasso, to Michel Angelo, Raffaelle, Correggio, Titian,

and Palladio, has nobly merited the title. Art, indeed, the foster-child both of the state and the church, rose higher than literature, which could minister but weakly to the luxury of the new rulers, even by prostituting itself, as it often unhesitatingly did, not less to their debaucheries than to their political profligacy. There are, however, two great poetical names of the century, which alone would be sufficient to immortalize it; and the number of artists as well as literary men whom it produced, and the various departments in which art and letters were cultivated, are so extraordinary as to make it difficult either to arrange its intellectual history, or to describe the most interesting events within reasonable limits.

LITERATURE.

The reformation of Luther generated in Italy a host of theological writers, more than one of them protestants, whom we must pass over in absolute silence; and the spirit of learning manifested itself also in the lighter branches of literature, producing the three famous Latin poets, Sannazaro, Vida, and Fracastoro. Among the authors in that language must likewise be numbered Leo the Tenth's secretaries, the Cardinals Sadoleto and Bembo. Sannazaro, Bembo, and the accomplished Annibale Caro, having been equally successful in Italian composition, form a link between the erudition of the age, and its works in the living tongue.

From the beginning of the century to its close, the Chivalrous Poems are those towards which we are most strongly attracted. But numerous as the writers of such poems were, no injustice would be done though we omitted the names of all but four:—Lodovico Ariosto (1474—1533); Francesco Berni (1499—1536); Bernardo Tasso (1493—1569); and Torquato Tasso (1544—1595).

Ariosto, the son of a Ferrarese gentleman, was born at Reggio, and passed his life in the service of the Este, whose niggardly contempt for one whose mention of them has preserved their names from merited oblivion,

furnishes no incidents of such lively interest as a succeeding generation of the same house were doomed to afford by their ill-treatment of another man of genius. Messer Lodovico has told us most of the facts of his own history in his easy epistolary satires; and his lightheartedness enabled him to fight his way stoutly through long-continued annoyances. His Orlando Furioso, first published, but incomplete, in 1516, was brought to its present shape in 1532. He takes up the story of the Orlando Innamorato at the point where Boiardo had stopped; but instantly turns aside from his leader's track to introduce new characters of his own, on whom, and not on the nominal hero, he makes the interest of his action hinge. The chief of these are the knight Ruggiero and the beautiful Bradamante, whose love and adventures form the main thread of the plot; and its catastrophe is their marriage, from which were to descend the family of his ducal patrons. The madness of Orlando, the perils into which Charlemagne and his empire are thrown in their Saracenic war through the champion's absence, and his final restoration to reason, compose nothing more than the most prominent episode of the poem. The personages come forward and disappear in quickly shifting groups; an adventure opens upon us, reaches its acmé of interest, and the curtain suddenly falls on it to make room for a new incident, which is again concealed when our curiosity is upon the stretch; and often this tantalizing caprice is repeated, till the overtasked memory loses hold of the clue amidst the confusion. In much of this the poet goes no farther than his models, the older Italian metrical romances. But with him, in the management of these digressions, there is always something more,—a little of that wilful sporting with his readers, and with his own teeming fancy, which is strikingly observable also in the gay and mocking tone so often assumed throughout the poem, and forming indeed its ruling key. He becomes not less tired of pathos than of heroism; and the half-serious air with which preceding rhymers had treated chivalrous stories, hinted to him the means of affording variety.

The grace and animation with which Ariosto has blended his different qualities into one ideal whole, excellencies recognised by his countrymen in the minutest peculiarities of his diction, are equally perceptible in those essential merits which foreigners are more capable of appreciating. The sportive gayety of his poem is supported by the rainbow-colours in which his supernatural inventions float: his fairies and enchanters, often mischievous, are never gloomy; and his spells and instruments of magic,—Angelica's ring, Bradamante's spear, Ruggiero's shield, and the griffin-horse on which Astolfo flies to the moon to find not only Orlando's lost wits, but a small missing portion of his own,—are all made to pass before us as ministers of cheerfulness, without exciting uneasiness, and seldom even moral feeling. We must seek the felicity of his genius in this gay and sunny temper, co-operating with other high poetical endowments. One of these is his exuberant fancy in picturesque scenery and incident, of which we may take as instances, Alcina's garden-island and the story of Ginevra; and another is his passionate strength, not indeed in dialogue, but in description, which, too often immorally voluptuous, rises towards the sublime in the narrative of Orlando's insanity, and dissolves into tender sadness in the tale of Olimpia and Birone, or in that of Isabella and the Scottish prince Zerbino.

Berni holds his place as an Italian classic by a very whimsical tenure. Boiardo's Orlando Innamorato being intolerable, especially to the natives of Middle Italy, from its roughness and provincialisms, he, a Tuscan, a canon, and a man of pleasure, already known by those laughing satires which are the models of the style called after him Bernesque, undertook, while the Orlando Furioso was delighting every one, to make the older poem equally readable. In 1541, accordingly, he published the whole work "newly composed."* He follows his author closely

* "Nuovamente composto,"—"Riffatto tutto nuovo." See the original title-pages in Ferrario, tom. iv. p. 55.

in his characters, his incidents, almost indeed stanza for stanza; but the colouring is his own, the playful illustrations which abound throughout, and the tone in which the stupendous marvels of the tale are told, being a seeming attempt at gravity, in the midst of which the poet's own extravagant inventions force from him a burst of merriment. Berni's unrestrained laughter at his own adventurous pictures, is quite different from Ariosto's playful smile; but this new aspect of knighthood is even more diverting than the other; and if the Tuscan romance falls immeasurably short of the Ferrarese in the higher poetical qualities, it is not by any means less entertaining.*

In the innumerable poems of chivalry which inundated the world after those two, Charlemagne and his paladins began to give way to Arthur with his Round Table, to characters purely imaginary, or even to the personages of the Greek fables; while, at the same time, the themes were often treated both with a regularity of plan and an earnestness of feeling, equally alien to the older chivalrous poetry of Italy. In this class stood the narrative works of Alamanni and Trissino, whose names live in spite of these unfortunate attempts.

But the link between the wildly irregular romance of Ariosto, and the symmetrical epic of his great rival, is best formed by Tasso's own father, Bernardo, whose Amadigi, treating the romantic history of Amadis de Gaule, was published in 1560. On the merit of this long poem the critics are divided.† It is enough here to notice, on the one hand, its seriousness and elevation of sentiment, which are quite in the character of epic poetry, and, on the other, its triple plot and continual intertwining of incidents, which throw it back towards the older school.

Bernardo Tasso, a poor though noble native of Bergamo, passed, after several vicissitudes, into the service of the

* On the curious question of Berni's alleged protestantism during the last years of his life, see Hallam's Literature, vol. i. p. 503.

† Contrast Sismondi's severe censure (vol. ii. p. 94-96, Engl. Tr.) with Ginguené's minute and favourable analysis (tome v. chap. 12).

Prince Sanseverino of Salerno, and afterwards, upon marrying, he retired to the beautifully situated town of Sorrento, where his son Torquato was born. The prince's resistance to the Spanish viceroy, plunged both himself and his followers into ruin; Tasso's wife died of sorrow in a convent; but the protection of the Duke of Urbino and the Venetians gave to the widower a few years of repose. His son, a student at Padua, in spite of his earnest entreaties, devoted himself to poetry, and at eighteen, shortly before his father's death, published his first work, the romantic poem called Rinaldo. Torquato had formed the idea of his Gierusalemme Liberata before he left the university: three cantos of his first sketch are still extant, composed in 1563; and the poem in its improved shape was begun on his entering the service of the Cardinal D'Este at Ferrara, two years later. It was read, as it proceeded, to the sisters of the cardinal and of the Duke Alfonso; and some lyrical pieces, composed in the intervals of his great work, aided in making the young poet's genius known all over Italy. Visiting Paris, he composed for the court, on his return, the pastoral drama of Aminta; and in 1575 the Jerusalem Delivered was brought to a close, though its publication was delayed by the nervousness of the author. Thrown back from the land of poetical vision into the turmoil of the actual world, where critical cavils combined against him with court intrigues, and perhaps with unfortunate love, his sensitive and overwrought mind soon exhibited its first symptoms of derangement. He put himself into the hands of the Inquisition at Bologna, acknowledging, as heretical or atheistical doubts, what the inquisitors had sense enough to consider as illusions of hypochondria; every effort of his friends failed in calming his mind; and in 1577, having been temporarily placed in a Ferrarese convent, he made his escape, and travelled on foot over the mountains of the Abruzzi, to his sister's house at Sorrento. After wandering through Italy during a year and a half longer, he returned to Ferrara in 1579, was received, it is said, with neglect, and broke out in

reproaches against the duke and his family; upon which he was seized by Alfonso's order, and immured in the hospital of Sant' Anna, a common madhouse.

The real motives of this step remain involved in total uncertainty. The cause generally received is Tasso's attachment to the prince's sister Leonora, a woman of literary taste, who, however, had little beauty, with delicate health, and was thirty years old when the poet came to Ferrara in his twenty-first year. The story of this ill-fated love has been the theme of so much affecting poetry, that its demolition by proof would almost be matter of regret; and whatever may have been the reason for Torquato's confinement, enough is known regarding it to cover his oppressors with everlasting disgrace.

He remained in his horrible prison more than seven years, utterly neglected by the duke and his sisters. There, with the cries of maniacs ringing in his ears, he composed some of his most beautiful writings, both in prose and verse; and his Jerusalem was printed seven times in 1581, in despite of his indignant remonstrances. His intellect, previously shaken, was not proof against the horrors of his situation; and visions of a tormenting demon, of flames and frightful noises, with an apparition of the Virgin and Child to comfort him, attested but too sadly his mental aberration in the last years of his captivity. Shame, fear of infamy, or solicitation of friends, proved at length stronger than the claims of justice; and in July 1586 the victim was released.

He resumed his literary avocations, corrected his philosophical dialogues, composed new ones, and in the year after his liberation either completed or recast his tragedy of Torrismondo, begun before his imprisonment. In 1592, he published in Rome the Gierusalemme Conquistata, being an altered edition of his great poem, which, with some fine improvements in detail, loses as a whole the spirit of the Gierusalemme Liberata, and substitutes religious mysticism for the chivalrous temper of the crusades. In the new version he erased every one of those flatteries to the house of Este, which

appear in the original. He next commenced the Sette Giornate, a poem in blank verse on the creation.

Soon after this, being at Naples, he was invited by his new patron the Cardinal Aldobrandini, nephew of the reigning pope, to return to Rome, and receive in the Capitol the honours of that triumphal installation which had been bestowed on Petrarch. He mournfully told his friend and biographer, Manso, that he should not live to see the ceremony; but he obeyed the summons, was conducted into the city by applauding crowds, and received with distinguished honour by Clement. In the following spring, being the time fixed for his coronation, he felt his end approaching, and retired to the convent of Sant' Onofrio to die. He there wrote a farewell letter to Costantini of Ferrara, his dearest friend, and expired placidly, aged fifty-one years. In the little monastery, on the brow of the Janiculan Mount, the brethren still point out the chamber where he died, together with an oak in their garden beneath which he had loved to sit; and a simple inscription on a flat stone, in the pavement of the church, names the spot as the grave of Torquato Tasso.

Ahi lagrime! Ahi dolore!*

The delicate fancy of Tasso's poetry harmonised with his character in life; but it is not easy, in passing at once from his sad history to his writings, to speak of them with cool impartiality. The Jerusalem Delivered, a work of art exquisitely finished in every part, is less capable than any other modern poem of being appre-

* These words compose the first and last lines of the chorus which closes the Torrismondo, an ode whose sorrowful melody, drawn from the poet's own inmost heart, flows like a gush of tears.

Ahi lagrime! Ahi dolore!

* * *

Che più si spera, ò che s' attende omai?
Dopo triunfo e palma,
Sol qui restano all' alma
Lutto e lamenti, e lagrimosi lai.
Che più giova amicizia, ò gio va amore?
Ahi lagrime! Ahi dolore!

ciated by analyses, extracts, or translations: but its place among efforts of genius is fixed by universal consent; and, with all its faults, there are not two epics of later times that are entitled to rank above it. Its chief and most frequent defects, those cold antitheses and that ringing of changes upon words, which have infected, more or less, all Italian poetry since Petrarch, are as commonly acknowledged as its chivalrous tone of sentiment, the strength and picturesqueness that dwell in much of its natural scenery, the brilliant but yet devout imagination of its supernatural agency, and that soothing, ideal tenderness, which often concentrates itself into irresistible pathos. These fine qualities manifest themselves in so many parts of the poem, that injustice is done by any enumeration; and, even when we make a choice, it is not easy to say where the poet triumphs most:—in the Olindo and Sophronia, so full of devoted passion;—in the voluptuous loveliness of Armida, and the romantic witchery of her haunted abode;—in the heroic spirit of martial enthusiasm with which the Christian knights so often march to conquer the holy grave;—in that profoundly-touching scene where Clorinda is slain by her lover Tancred, and, before she expires, receives from his hand the purifying water of baptism;—or in those isolated touches of generous and noble feeling, which, amidst much diversity of character, shed over all the principal personages a light resembling the summer sunshine.

The Gierusalemme is essentially different from any Italian poem which had preceded it. It shares with the Orlando the chivalrous spirit and the tone of supernatural colouring; but it abjures Ariosto's lightness of thought, and substitutes for his intricate tissue of incidents a regular and simple plot, in which all the successive parts work together for one great end. A single campaign of the first crusade, that of 1099, embraces the whole action of the piece. The knights of the cross, electing Godfrey of Bouillon as their chief, march against Jerusalem: the defence made by the Saracens is aided

by the machinations of the demons; and Armida, the sorceress-niece of the Sultan of Damascus, weakens the camp of the besiegers by enticing its bravest champions to follow her into the desert. The adventures of the seduced knights gradually draw to a point, till the rescue of Rinaldo, the boldest of all, and the destined destroyer of the enchantments, removes the last barrier to conquest, and the Christian hosts, bursting into the city of David, kneel victorious before the Holy Sepulchre. Tasso's well-selected theme, not only historical and religious, but awakening national not less than personal sympathies, was as dissimilar to the subjects of the romance poets, as was his mode of treatment; and, though we may see how he could have made his panorama of the crusade either more original or more true to nature, it is not easy to conceive a picture more delightfully romantic than that which he has chosen to paint.

The Drama was the department of inventive literature which, next to the chivalrous poetry, found the most numerous votaries; but it was far from reaching the merit of its elder rival.

We may set down the Sofonisba of Giangiorgio Trissino, which was played in 1515, as the earliest of the regular Italian tragedies. Its rhymeless versification, its attempt at discrimination of character, and its infrequent pathos, were excellencies overbalanced by a stiff adherence to antique forms, a general poverty of style, and a great unskilfulness in arrangement. The Rosmonda of Giovanni Rucellai, a noble Florentine, acted in the same year, treats with more invention than Trissino, though with less force, the horrible story of Alboin and his wife, and begins that series of revolting subjects which accompanies us in almost all the subsequent tragedies of the century. Alamanni's Antigone, which followed, is little else than a translation from Sophocles. Tasso's Torrismondo carries on a dreadful tale of unwitting incest to its consummation in suicide; but, garrulous, descriptive, and undramatic, it rests its claim to notice on

its author's name and on the solemnly pathetic beauty of its choruses. All these horrors, however, shrink into insignificance beside those of the Orbecche, one of several tragic dramas written by the novelist Cinthio Giraldi of Ferrara; and the catalogue may be closed with the Canace of the learned Sperone Speroni.

The comedies of the century were better than the tragedies, but are, almost without exception, unapproachable on account of their gross licentiousness. It is an instructive though painful lesson in the history of the times, to know that the obscene Calandra, which, having been composed about the beginning of the century, opens the list, was the work of an ecclesiastic, Bernardo Dovizio, afterwards Cardinal Bibbiena. Ariosto's five comedies, which have much happy wit, lie under the same charge; and none is more grievously open to it than the Mandragola of Machiavelli, which Leo X. caused to be acted before him by players despatched from Florence on purpose. Most of the comedies were taken, with more or fewer changes, from Plautus or Terence, whose indecencies, however, were in no case considered indecent enough for an Italian audience of the sixteenth century. But in some, even of those imitated plays, and still more in such as had original plots, there is a lively wit, added sometimes to an accurate observation of life, which seemed to promise for the next age something like the spirit of dramatic poetry in England. Several plays of Il Lasca (the academic name of the Florentine Antonfrancesco Grazzini) possess a good deal of truth and amusing incident, with less ribaldry than usual; and the three comedies of Salviati, the calumniator of Tasso, have plots most ingeniously constructed. But, as selections taken from contemporary life, no works of the age are so faithful or instructive as the most debauched of all its comedies, written by the most profligate of all its authors, Pietro Aretino, surnamed for his libels the Scourge of Princes. From his La Talanta, and in a less degree from Il Hipocrito, we may glean most singular notices of low life in Rome; but his most complete picture is the play

called La Cortigiana. We could conceive ourselves to be reading one of our own Elizabethan comedies, while we there become acquainted with the successive groups of strongly-drawn characters;—the clownish country-squire Messer Maco, and his mock-patron the roguish painter Maestro Andrea; the town-gull Parabolano, and his swindling servant Rosso; or, above all, the spirited portrait of the hideous hag Alvigia.

But the Italian drama was also cultivated in a direction different from either tragedy or comedy. Its third form has produced some delightful poetry, and, oddly enough, has enabled the modern opera to trace its pedigree to the Idylls of Theocritus. Early in the sixteenth century there appear court-plays which, like Politian's, are not far from being attempts to put the ancient pastoral into action; but the exquisite Aminta of Torquato Tasso remains the model, and, perhaps excepting Milton's Comus, the only perfect example in this imperfect species. Its most celebrated imitation, the Pastor Fido of the Ferrarese Giovanni Battista Guarini, published in the year 1590, is more generally known than the original; a distinction owing less to its real beauties, than to those defects of luxuriance and conceits, which make it a link between the age of Tasso and the affectation of the next century. The choruses of these pastoral dramas, and sometimes portions of the scene, had musical accompaniments, and pantomime was soon introduced in the Intermezzi, devised as resting-places between the acts. There remained only a step or two from these pieces to the opera; these steps were taken before the end of the century; and the musical drama was rooted firmly in both its branches, the serious and the comic.

In all the minor walks of literature during the same time, we encounter votaries with whom we have already become acquainted. The best satirical poets are Ariosto, Berni, and Alamanni; the best didactic are Alamanni and Rucellai; and in lyrical poetry the highest place belongs to Bembo, Bernardo and Torquato Tasso, Ala-

manni, and Guarini. To the last class, however, must be added the names of Molza and Guidiccioni, with two others still more celebrated, those of Vittoria Colonna, marchioness of Pescara, and the sculptor Michel Angelo Buonarroti. The poetry of these two illustrious persons agrees in that nobility of sentiment, which is its principal charm ; and the sonnets and canzoni of the latter derive a singular interest from that spirit of devotion, humbly, penitentially, warmly sincere, which breathes through the religious section of them. Their doctrinal theology is as curious as their temper; for, scripturally simple and ascetically austere, bare of all mythology pagan or catholic, they are as truly protestant as those verses that have earned for Vittoria the undeserved honour of ranking as a disciple of the Reformation. If it is solemnly interesting to see the man of genius, weary of fame and prostrating himself at the foot of the cross, it would be likewise pleasing to watch him in the struggles of his fiery spirit with earthly passion. But his artificial love-sonnets, mere imitations of Petrarch, in the prevailing fashion of his time, do not afford us this gratification : one thought, the power of love to purify and ennoble genius, is the only idea that is worthily embodied ; and, notwithstanding the beauty of some pieces, we rise from the perusal of the volume indifferent even about the solution of the riddle which, as in the case of Shakspeare's sonnets, remains still unsolved, regarding the person to whom the poems were addressed.

In turning to the prose literature of the sixteenth century, we are met at once by the most celebrated of its masters, the Tuscan statesman, philosopher, and historian, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469—1527). The events of this great writer's life owe a special interest to the light they may throw on his real design in composing that extraordinary book,—Il Principe,—whose selfish but sagacious political maxims have made their author's name very unenviably proverbial. This is no fit place for

entering on that curious question, nor indeed for attempting to appreciate the profound reflection which is displayed not only in The Prince, but also, with much of its bad spirit, in the writer's Discourses on the First Decad of Livy, and in his classical History of Florence. The Florentine secretary is followed, at no great distance in the same style of excellence, by his friend and countryman Francesco Guicciardini (1482—1540), whose demerits as a citizen may be for a time forgotten by those who read his tedious but philosophical History of Italy, during his own times, ending with the year 1534. After these writers, if we deny a place to the libellous man of taste, Paolo Giovio, there come a crowd of Florentine annalists, who, during the whole century, represent every shade of political opinion, and possess for the historical student of the period a value which in a literary point of view they do not reach.* The Venetians followed with their historians, and the Genoese, Ferrarese, and Neapolitans with theirs.† Among the general histories, Adriani's alone calls for notice; and the principal merit of Davanzati's writings lies in their idiomatic and pointed style.

Among the historians of the fine arts were, the painter Vasari, Raffaelle Borghini, Benvenuto Cellini, and Giampaolo Lomazzo; and literary history began to show its face, supported by a few men of much learning, among whom the most useful was the Jesuit Antonio Possevino of Mantua. Science counted illustrious cultivators, especially in natural history and medicine; while mathematics and metaphysics, besides some votaries who were judicious as well as learned, possessed the strangest of mankind, Girolamo Cardano of Pavia. The Italian novels of this age were numerous, but are more instructive than edifying as pictures of the times they paint. The best

* Jacopo Nardi; Filippo Nerli; Bernardo Segni; Benedetto Varchi; Vincenzo Borghini; Scipione Ammirato.

† For Venice, Cardinal Bembo, Paolo Paruta; for Genoa, Jacopo Bonfadio, Uberto Foglietta; for Ferrara, Giambattista Pigna; for Naples, Angelo di Costanzo.

are those of Matteo Bandello, whose two hundred and fourteen short tales would not make us suspect him of having been a French bishop. The comic writer Il Lasca, and Girolamo Parabosco, rank among the licentious novelists; and two more, Cinthio Giraldi and Sebastiano Erizzo, deserve honourable distinction for having aimed with partial success at purifying the moral taste of their readers.

PAINTING.

The golden age of modern painting is embraced in the first seventy-five years of the sixteenth century; and, among the great artists of that period, four stand decisively pre-eminent:—Michel Angelo Buonarroti of Florence, who was born in the Casentino in 1474, and died at Rome in 1563; Raffaelle Sanzio, who was born at Urbino on Good Friday 1483, and died at Rome on Good Friday 1520; Tiziano Vecelli, of Cadore in the Venetian State, who was born in 1477, and lived till 1576; and Antonio Allegri, of Correggio in the territory of Parma, who, born in 1494, died in 1534.

The first two are the chiefs in that highest class of art, which considers itself as the serious interpreter of human life, and the awakener of warm and lofty emotion. The other two are at the head of that less ambitious school, in which the gratification of the senses, if not stated as the paramount aim, is at least principally used as the avenue to the mind. Michel Angelo and Raffaelle aimed at greatness and significance; the epic sublimity of the one, and the beauty and dramatic pathos of the other, were alike attained by excellence in form and composition, not by the sensual charm of colour: the former was the Dante of art; the latter was its Shakspeare. Titian and Correggio were contented to seek excellence within a lower sphere. They indeed addressed the intellect and the heart, and owed their superiority over those who followed their path to the very fact, that these spoke usually if not always to the senses alone; but in Titian's works the perfection of

colour, and in Correggio's a magical atmosphere of light and shade, form the instruments with which they worked, and the excellencies to which worthier purposes were more or less completely sacrificed.

The Roman school, of which Raffaelle is regarded as the founder, expired with him and his immediate scholars. Michel Angelo was the acknowledged head of the Florentines; but the style which received that name soon prevailed over most provinces of Italy, while in Florence itself it shared its reputation with the older manner of Leonardo Da Vinci. In the Venetian school Titian, although the greatest artist, was far from being the only teacher or model; but all the masters coincided in their leading principles, and painting flourished there longer than in any other quarter. Correggio stood almost alone, and the influence of his works hardly became perceptible till the succeeding century.

MICHEL ANGELO.

Painting, sculpture, and architecture, with fortification, theology, and poetry, employed by turns the universal genius of the great Florentine. Born of a distinguished family, who reluctantly gave way to his inclination, he was first instructed in painting: and for his study of this art as well as of sculpture, the antiques in Florence and Rome, and the anatomy of the human body, were actively laid under contribution. Indeed, his profound anatomical knowledge gave at once the most prominent feature to his style of design, and the most dangerous of the examples which he furnished to his indiscriminating imitators; and among his grandest figures some are exact reproductions of the Torso of the Belvedere. The influence which this extraordinary man exercised over every department of art, was as great in painting as in any of his other pursuits; but his predilection for sculpture, assisted perhaps by other motives, diverted him from the use of the pencil, and his works were consequently few.

He despised oil-painting, and it is doubtful whether

there exists a single genuine picture of his executed in that way. Florence contains a doubtful piece in oils representing the Fates, and a composition of a Holy Family in distemper, which is acknowledged to be that which he produced for Angelo Doni.* But several masterpieces, still extant, are believed to have been painted after his designs. Rome contains two of these,—Daniele da Volterra's Deposition from the Cross, in the church of the Trinità de' Monti, and an Annunciation by Marco Venusti, in the Sacristy of the Lateran.† The finest, however, of all the works in which his assistance has been traced, is the oil-painting of the Raising of Lazarus, executed by the Venetian Fra Sebastiano del Piombo, who, after acquiring great excellence in his native school, went to Rome and studied design under Buonarroti. He was prompted to attempt the Lazarus by his master, who desired to eclipse, by a union of Florentine drawing with Venetian colour, the great picture of the Transfiguration, on which Raffaelle was then engaged. Michel Angelo unquestionably designed the principal group in Sebastiano's piece; and the strength of expression, the grandeur of composition and style, and the anatomical knowledge, favour the belief that he actually painted a great part of it. The figure of Lazarus, seated on his coffin, assisting in disengaging himself from the grave-clothes, and gazing up at the Saviour in the first return of consciousness, amazed, grateful, and adoring, is in every respect inspired by the patriarchal sublimity and powerful expression which belong to the master.‡

But Buonarroti's genius shone forth unclouded in his immense series of paintings in fresco, which still adorn Rome in the Sistine chapel of the Vatican. Their

* The group of the Fates is in the Pitti Palace; the circular picture of the Holy Family is in the tribune of the Ufizj.

† For other instances, see Lanzi; Scuola Fiorentina, epocha ii.

‡ This grand painting is now in the British National Gallery, which possesses another extremely characteristic piece (The Dream), painted likewise from a design of Michel Angelo.

history is as characteristic as the works themselves. Before leaving Florence he had begun, and he afterwards at intervals finished, a work which, now lost, is described as having, more than any other, evinced his anatomical skill and power of expression. This was the famous cartoon of Pisa, figuring the Florentine soldiers bathing in the Arno, and called to arms on a sudden attack by the Pisans.* In 1504 Julius II. invited him to Rome, and employed him as a sculptor; but some years later, instigated, it is said, by the artist's enemies, who hoped to show his incapacity, the same pontiff ordered him to paint in fresco the ceiling of the Sistine chapel, refusing to accept his excuses or his recommendation of Raffaelle for the task. Forced thus upon a method of painting with whose mechanism he was quite unacquainted, he sent for the best fresco-painters of Florence, and learned the art from its rudiments; after which, effacing the work of his instructors, he executed the whole of the immense ceiling with his own hands, in the space of twenty months, finishing it in 1512 or 1513. The universal admiration excited by this stupendous work did not tempt the artist to prosecute painting farther; and his next great undertaking, the Last Judgment, which fills the end of the same chapel, was not commenced till the pontificate of Paul III., and was completed, after eight years' labour, in 1541. His last frescoes, the Crucifixion of Saint Peter and the Conversion of Saint Paul, both in the Pauline chapel of the Vatican, were the offspring of old age, and bodily, though not mental, exhaustion.†

The frescoes of the Sistine chapel represent, from the pages of the Bible, the outlines of the religious history

* See its history in Lanzi, *loc. cit.*, and Vasari, Vita di Michel Agnolo. A description of it, from old prints and Lord Leicester's small copy, will be found in Fuseli, lecture iii., Works, 1831.

† The frescoes of the Cappella Paolina are smoked and decayed, so as to be almost undistinguishable; but an attempt has lately been made to restore them. The Sistine frescoes, though dingy, are still distinct.

of man. The spirit which animates them is the stern awfulness of the Hebrew prophets; the milder graces of the new covenant glimmer faintly and unfrequently through; the beauty and repose of classicism are all but utterly banished. The master's idea of godhead is that of superhuman strength in action, and the divinity which he thus conceives he imparts to all his figures of the human race. The work, as a whole, is one which no other mind must venture to imitate; but of those very qualities which make it dangerous as a model in art, none could be removed without injuring its severe sublimity.

The ceiling is divided into numerous compartments, each of which contains a scene selected from the Old Testament:—the Creator forming the elements, the earth, the first man;—the creation of Eve, and the fall of man, in which feminine grace for a moment visits the fancy of the artist;—the expulsion from Eden;—the deluge, and the subsequent history of Noah;—the brazen serpent, the triumphs of David and of Judith, and the symbolical history of Jonah. The absorbed greatness which animates the principal figures of these groups, is repeated in the ornamental divisions of the ceiling, where are the Sibyls, and those unparalleled figures of the Prophets, which are the highest proofs of the painter's religious grandeur.

The Last Judgment, a colossal composition, sixty feet in height by thirty in breadth, and embracing an almost countless number of figures, is a more ambitious and also a more celebrated work, but is far from being so completely successful. No artist but Michel Angelo could have made it what it is; but it might have been made much greater by him,—the painter of the Eve, the Delphic Sibyl, the Lazarus, and the Prophets. Its faults are many;—an entire absence of beauty and of repose;—vagueness and monotony of character, which is increased by the general nudity of the figures;—ostentatious display of academic attitudes and anatomy;—and, in some prominent personages, especially the

Judge, an absolute meanness and grossness of conception. The merits of this wonderful monument of genius are less easily enumerated. Its heaven is not the heaven either of art or of religion; but its hell is more terribly sublime than any thing which imagination ever framed. Vast as the piece is, its composition is simple and admirable, and nothing ever approached to its perfect unity of sentiment. Every thought and emotion are swallowed up in one idea,—the presence of the righteous Judge: with the exception of a single unobtrusive group composed by a reunited wife and husband, every one in the crowd of the awakened dead stands solitary, waiting for his doom. The tremendous drama has no individualized scene. Only at the very foot of the picture, the opening graves of earth border on the caverns and fiery river of the place of punishment: the rest of the actors float in lurid air. The figures compose three main stages of groups, each above the other, but skilfully united. In the uppermost part of the scene the Saviour, rising to condemn the sinful, occupies the centre; above him the angels rear his cross and the pillar of scourging; around are the elect, anxious, eager, and awe-struck. Peter humbly gives up his keys; Adam and Eve come tremblingly forward; other saints are distinguishable by their signs of martyrdom amidst the agitated throng; and, at the Redeemer's side, his mother turns sadly away from beholding the misery of the lost. Beneath this assembly of saved souls hangs a second range of figures, between heaven and earth. The central group among them is composed of the angels of the Apocalypse, wild and mysterious figures, some of whom blow the trumpets, one opens the book of life, and another sorrowfully closes the book of condemnation. On a level with these, a cluster of the faithful rise slowly and painfully towards the right hand of the judgment-seat, some of them assisted by angelic ministers, one of whom pulls up a male and female by a rosary, the type of prayer. In a corresponding group on the left, which has been called the

Seven Deadly Sins, the angels repulse sinners who endeavour to rise, plunging them headlong, and aided from beneath by demons. One prominent figure of this scene, a shrinking man covering his face, seized by two fiends, and wrapped round by a snake, is the image of helpless despair. At the foot of the picture, towards one side, the dead awake and extricate themselves from the earth, exhibiting all the stages of reviving life: some are assisted in soaring by the angels, while others are dragged back by the fiends, and some by spectral hands stretched out from behind the rocks of the fiery cavern, which opens in the middle of the foreground. On the other side of this cave, Dante's grim ferryman stands in his bark, which is crowded by miserable souls, grasped by the demons; while some of them voluntarily, in their dread of the presence of the Judge, plunge from the boat, and precipitate themselves amidst those evil spirits, with half-human forms, who fill a corner of the piece.

RAFFAELLE.

The life of Buonarroti offers some incident, and supplies several anecdotes which illustrate his indomitable character: the history of his great rival Raffaelle was as placid as his delightful genius.* The son of an obscure painter in Urbino, he was placed in youth under Pietro Perugino, and, in one or more visits to Florence, learned the principles which Leonardo and Buonarroti had severally endeavoured to communicate to their native school. From Leonardo he cannot be said to have borrowed much; from Masaccio he derived greatly more; and to Michel Angelo's cartoon at this early stage, as well as to his Sistine ceiling afterwards, he certainly owed

* The most valuable source for the history and criticism of Raffaelle's works is Quatremère de Quincy's Histoire de la Vie et des Ouvrages de Raphaël; Paris, 1833 (2d edition). Rumohr, in the third volume of the Forschungen, rectifies several errors in historical details, and speculates on some doubtful points with all his peculiar skill of connoisseurship. Vasari's Life of the artist is exceedingly perplexed and unsatisfactory.

deep obligations. In his twenty-sixth year, invited by his kinsman Bramante, he migrated to Rome, where he laboured with unwearied industry from that time till his death, which took place when he was thirty-seven years old, and about to be raised by Leo X. to the rank of a cardinal.

Raffaelle found the mechanism of art nearly complete, and its application no longer exclusively ecclesiastical. These two circumstances gave full play to that union of powers, which his mind possessed to an unequalled extent. Far less correct than Michel Angelo in drawing and anatomy, less profound in his study of the antique, and less capable of dealing with those loftiest themes that may be said to hover on the very brink of impracticability, he yet possessed knowledge of a high order, an elevated sense of sublimity and energy within his own sphere, an extensive and felicitous invention, and a feeling of beauty and grace which was the very purest and most divine that art has ever boasted. The idealism of his genius was united to a perception of character and expression, and a dramatic power of representing human action, which he used with the happiest effect when his subject called for their exercise. His admirers are influenced more by their own prepossessions than by his peculiar merits, when they give the preference to his Madonnas, saints, angels, or apostles, to his portraits, or to his historical and epic compositions.

The general progress of Raffaelle's manner may be traced with sufficient certainty. He appears at first as little more than the ablest pupil of Pietro ; inspired by all the warmth and tenderness of the Perugian school, but embarrassed by all his master's timidity and littleness. When he had become acquainted with the bolder spirit and the better mechanism of the Florentines, we see how his genius gradually extricated itself, and how, though still guided by the devotional temper of his youthful models, he attained greater freedom both in handling and invention. In his earliest works at Rome he struggles

to emerge into a sphere wider than either of these: his idealism is not lost, but it is strengthened by a more intimate acquaintance with life and nature; and both his fancy and his power of observation are rendered gradually more efficient by an improved technical skill, by greater ease and strength of drawing, by greater mastery of colour as well as of light and shade, and by rapid approaches towards that unity of conception and that breadth of design, which ennoble his finest works.

Till we find Raffaelle in Rome, we must be contented to trace his progress by his altar-pieces, and two or three portraits. Of genuine pictures belonging to this youthful period, and still in Italy, several possess very high merit; and one of these,—the Borghese Entombment,—painted after the artist had nearly emancipated himself from the Umbrian trammels, is equal to the best of his works both in expression and composition.*

His residence in Rome extended to no more than eleven years; and the development of his powers is best learned from the fresco-paintings and cartoons, which were the leading occupation of that period; while his oil-paintings will afterwards complete the view of his varied genius.

His great Frescoes cover the walls and part of the roofs, in four of the state-rooms belonging to the old Vatican palace. The first chamber, called that of the Segnatura, was finished in 1511; and under the reign of the same pope, Julius II., the next apartment, named,

* In Rome:—(in the Vatican Gallery), three pieces of different ages, from the church of San Francesco in Perugia: (in the Borghese Palace), the Entombment of Christ, painted about 1506. In Milan:—(in the Brera College), the Sposalizio or Betrothal of the Virgin, bearing the date of 1504. In Florence:—(in the Pitti Palace), the Madonna del Granduca, the Madonna of Pescia left unfinished at Florence in 1508, the portraits of the Florentine Angelo Doni and his wife Maddalena painted a little earlier: (in the Tribune), the Madonna del Cardellino, strongly Florentine, and the female portrait long mistaken for the Maddalena. In Naples:—(in the Studj), a Holy Family. In Perugia; several pieces, some of which are doubtful.

from its main subject, that of the Heliodorus, was partly painted. After the accession of Leo X., the artist completed that chamber, and proceeded to the third, that of the Incendio, which he finished in 1517. For the fourth, the hall of Constantine, he left the designs, which were painted by his surviving pupils. Under Leo he also designed the small frescoes in the arcade called Raffaelle's Loggie; and in the same pontificate he produced the celebrated Cartoons.

In the chamber of the Segnatura, the subjects are emblematized by four figures on the roof,—Theology, Jurisprudence, Philosophy, and Poetry; and upon the walls as many large compositions illustrate these several departments of thought. The Parnassus contains an assemblage of Greek, Roman, and modern Italian poets, with Apollo and the Muses; but neither this, nor the three paintings representing the history of Jurisprudence, demand so much attention as the two large pieces on the lateral walls, the Dispute on the Holy Sacrament, and the School of Athens.*—The former picture is a personification of the mysteries involved in the Roman catholic faith. At the foot of the piece, saints, doctors, and laymen, are assembled round an altar, to investigate and revere the tenets of the church; in the upper part, the heavens are opened, and the Saviour, overshadowed by the Dove, and blessed by the Father, stretches out his arms to announce the sacrifice for sin. This was the earliest of Raffaelle's works in Rome, and none of his later ones display so much of his youthful character,—the technical imperfection, the inartificial composition resembling monumental reliefs, and the enraptured warmth of feeling. The Gloria was first painted, and has a great deal of the antique stiffness, which is made more obvious by the gilding, profuse in this case, and not altogether wanting in some of the later frescoes.†

* Both names are wrong, but both are fixed by long custom.

† It is used sparingly in the School of Athens, and in the Heliodorus, but not at all in any of the other frescoes. In the Gloria of

—In the School of Athens, the master has advanced with wonderful swiftness from the timidity and flatness of the Disputa. The composition is masterly; the drawing is already infinitely freer as well as more accurate; the colouring is much more agreeable; and for invention, life, expression, and variety of character, none of his later works have surpassed this. In the background, the chiefs of the Grecian philosophy occupy a terrace which crowns the basement of a beautiful classical temple. In the centre of it stand Plato and Aristotle: the former, the most celebrated of speculative inquirers, raises his hand towards heaven; the latter, the representative of ethics and of physical experiment, points down towards the earth. Among the groups on each side of the leaders is Socrates, with Alcibiades and his other disciples; and on the steps lies Diogenes, solitary and morose. In the lower platform which constitutes the foreground, are grouped the minor philosophers, or the teachers of the secondary sciences, among whom we discover Pythagoras writing, Empedocles and a turbaned sage watching him, with youths and other figures thronging around; while Archimedes, a portrait of Bramante, bends down to explain a geometrical figure on a tablet.*

All the other paintings of the suite bear symbolical allusion to the history of the artist's patrons, Julius and Leo; and to them, not to him, we must attribute not only the choice of the subjects, but those groups from contemporary life which intrude into the historical ground of several pieces. The Second Chamber, besides scriptural stories on the compartments of the roof, contains on its walls Raffaelle's most finished frescoes;—the Miracle

the Sacrament, Raffaelle even imitates Pinturicchio, in strengthening the lights by raised points of gypsum.

* The cartoon of this piece, that is, the original drawing on pasteboard or paper from which, in fresco-painting, the subject is transferred to the wet plaster, is in the Ambrosian Library of Milan. On the classicism exhibited in the School of Athens, see Quatremère de Quincy, p. 61, *et seq.*

of Bolsena, the Heliodorus, the Attila, and the Liberation of Saint Peter. The event represented in the first of these, is said to have happened in the year 1263. A priest doubted the real presence; and, as he performed mass, blood trickled from the consecrated wafer. This subject, then, simply commemorated the supposed security of the Catholic doctrine against heretical attacks. The second picture celebrates the deliverance of the papal states from the invasion of foreign enemies, viewed as the result of the divine protection and the political ability of Julius. The type of this event was the attempt of Heliodorus to plunder the temple of Jerusalem, and the apparition of the terrible horseman and the two angels who drove him back. The subject of the third picture is the meeting of Leo the Great with Attila, on the banks of the Lake of Garda, when the pontiff's warning to the Hun to retire, is said to have been enforced by a threatening vision of the apostles Peter and Paul in the air. This occurrence was symbolically applied to Leo X.'s share in repulsing the French armies from Italy in 1513. Lastly, the same pope's release from the captivity into which he had fallen after the battle of Ravenna, was typified in the deliverance of Saint Peter by the angel.*

The Saint Peter, like the rest, has suffered much; and it is now exceedingly difficult to appreciate that skill of management in the different illuminations, which has attracted more notice to the piece than it would otherwise have received.—The Mass of Bolsena is every way more worthy of inspection. The raised altar fills the centre; and before it, towards the left of the eye, stands the incredulous priest gazing with speechless shame and awe upon the bloody wafer; while behind him the crowd press forward, with admirably varied appearances of wonder and devotion. On the opposite side kneels Julius II., contemplating the act of divine power with placid and unsurprised seriousness. Cardinals and other

* II. Maccabees, chap. iii. verse 24-27. Gibbon, chap. xxxv. Acts, chap. v. verse 19.

prelates are in the rear, with various but excellently given expressions; and the pope's Swiss guards, in the theatrical costume which they still retain, look on with a stupid heavy air of marvel.—The Heliodorus, equal to any thing that Raffaelle ever painted, is excelled by no work of any other master. The scene is laid in the temple, at whose remote extremity, before the altar, the high-priest Onias kneels in prayer, surrounded by other Levites. His petition is already heard. In the centre of the foreground the spectral horse bursts forward with its terrible rider, between the two young men, who, rushing through the air with the swiftness of light, brandish scourges over the sacrilegious pagan. Before this sublime group, and beneath the horse's feet, lies Heliodorus cast to the ground in silent terror. Beyond him one of his comrades wildly grasps his sword-hilt; a second shricks aloud; a third strives to hide his plunder. On the left of these principal characters is a lovely cluster of graceful females and children, lost in helpless amazement. Farther in the same direction, and at the very end of the picture, enters Julius II., as unwelcome an intruder as the heathen chief, borne on the "sella gestatoria," and surrounded by a portrait-group of attendants.—The Attila has neither the fine forms, the beautiful countenances, nor the supernatural grandeur and rapidity of the Heliodorus; but the piece is full of life and expression, and contains excellent historical likenesses. Along the background gleam the fires of dwellings burned by the Huns; and in the front, towards the spectator's left, advance the pope and his attendants. In the sky appear the two apostles, whose halo spreads a radiant light over the papal train, while the heaven darkens on the other side, towards which the apparitions point downwards with naked swords and threatening countenances. Beneath the darkness is the army of the approaching Huns. Their king on horseback, in the centre, alone sees the vision and recoils in terror. The panic is already communicated to his followers, though they know not its cause, and all is horror

and confusion ; a hurricane sweeps the standards ; the horses plunge and rear; and the barbarians are in the very act of turning for headlong flight.—The colouring of all this series of pictures is, or can be perceived to have once been, among the very finest of the effects that have ever been produced in fresco, uniting, especially in the picture of the Mass, the clear purity peculiar to that method of painting, with much of a magnificent depth of tone which it has seldom reached.

In the chamber of the Segnatura we may with confidence believe that the paintings were entirely executed by Raffaelle's own hand ; and there is little reason to suspect that he had received much assistance in painting the chamber of the Heliodorus. But before he reached the third apartment, he not only had other undertakings in progress, but could command the labour of numerous pupils, possessing such ability and such entire devotion to their master, as have never been united in the studio of any other artist. In the frescoes of the Third Chamber, the services of the scholars were freely used, and the execution sinks far below that of the preceding apartments, though the designs of all the pieces are wholly his own. The paintings of the four walls continue to symbolize, though less closely than the earlier ones. The first subject is Leo III. justifying himself by oath in the church from the charges of Charlemagne. The second is the coronation of the great conqueror, he and the pope being represented by portraits of Francis I. and Leo X. : the scene is interesting, being the interior of the old S. Peters, and the piece contains many beautiful and finely coloured heads. The third picture, the victory of Leo IV. over the Saracens at Ostia, is severely damaged, and has never been equal to the rest. The fourth is the celebrated Incendio del Borgo, representing a conflagration which, under the same pope, raged in the suburb close to S. Peters, and was said to have been stopped by the papal benediction given from the gallery of the basilica. Fault has been found with many things in this picture ; but it pos-

sesses beauties which atone for every defect of execution.

We may be contented with a glance at the fourth apartment, the Hall of Constantine, which was executed after the great artist's death, from his designs, but with alterations, by his pupils Giulio Romano, Il Fattore, and Raffaelle del Colle. The large paintings of the walls are four: the Apparition of the Cross to Constantine, his Baptism, his Donation of Rome to the Popes, and his Battle with Maxentius on the Tiber-bank beside the Milvian bridge, excellently painted by Giulio.

The name of Raffaelle's Loggie is given to one of the arcades surrounding the second story of the beautiful court in the Vatican, called that of St Damasus, which, planned and begun by Bramante, was completed by his greater kinsman. The arcade in question was adorned with paintings and stuccoes, wholly designed by Raffaelle, and executed by his scholars with little of his assistance. Elegant arabesque ornaments are scattered every where; and in the compartments of the vaulted roof is painted the collection of scriptural histories, commonly called Raphael's Bible. The Old Testament series is complete, and consists of forty-eight pieces; of the New Testament subjects, four only were taken from the great master's designs; and all the other pictures of this class which now appear in the Loggie, are poor productions belonging to the end of the same century. These beautiful Bible-histories have concurred with the cartoons in forming the taste of all succeeding painters in their treatment of scriptural subjects; and nowhere could art have found models more simply graceful or sublime, more significant in their way of telling the story, or more religiously and warmly pure in spirit.

The Vatican contains twenty-two pieces of Tapestry which bear Raffaelle's name. They form two sets. For the first and more celebrated, consisting of ten pieces, which were intended as hangings for the Sistine Chapel,

the artist painted the cartoons in the years 1515 and 1516, taking his subjects from the history of the Apostles. But, when the tapestries had been worked in Flanders, the designs were unaccountably allowed to lie unclaimed, till seven of them were acquired by Charles I. of England. After the king's death, Cromwell purchased these for the nation; and they have long been kept at Hampton Court.* The other three are not known to exist. The second set, now twelve in number, are worked with other incidents from the Life of Christ. It is uncertain when these were woven (certainly not till after Raffaelle's death), and it is usually believed that he did no more than furnish sketches for the cartoons, which were painted by others, partly indeed by Flemish artists. Of these some fragments exist in different collections, both in England and elsewhere. This second set is exceedingly inferior in execution to the first; but in the three pieces from the Massacre of Bethlehem, we perceive very much of the master's dramatic passion and fine discrimination of character; while the Resurrection and Ascension are both beautifully composed.†

The subjects of the first set of tapestries are the following:—The Miraculous Draught of Fishes; Christ delivering the Keys to Peter; Peter and John healing in the Temple; the Death of Ananias; Paul preaching at Athens; Paul striking Elymas the sorcerer blind; the Sacrifice of Lystra; the Conversion of Paul; Paul in the prison of Philippi during the earthquake; the Stoning of Stephen. The cartoons of Hampton Court are those of the first seven; and engravings of them are in every illustrated Bible. They exhibit the artist's genius

* They are in a melancholy, though perhaps unavoidable state of decay; and ere long we shall derive our only knowledge of them from the numerous engravings, and from Sir James Thornhill's tame but careful copies, which have been for some years in Mr Johnston of Straiton's collection in Edinburgh.

† The thirteenth piece of the second set, the Descent of Christ into Limbo, having, like the rest, been carried off from Rome in the end of last century, has disappeared, and is said to have been burned by Jew brokers for the sake of the gold embroidery.

in the very highest stage of its strength and development. The portrait-style, the middle-age costume, and the local scenery of the Vatican frescoes, are quite thrown aside; countenances, figures, attitudes, draperies, and accessories, all are finely and solemnly ideal; and the energy, variety, and truth of expression, are equalled by the exquisite breadth and harmony of the composition. The most admirable union of powers,—of skilful composition, animation, beauty, and dignity,—belongs to the Ananias, whose only defect is a want of prominence in the figure of Saint Peter. The Elymas is even superior, in the awe which spreads over the scene, as the apostle stretches out his hand to pronounce the sentence. In the Paul at Athens, the strong and simple majesty of the inspired preacher is contrasted with the most natural variety of expression in his hearers;—the devout converts;—the incredulous, contemptuous, wavering, or attentive philosophers;—the puzzled disputers;—and the comfortable man of trade. The Delivery of the Keys, if it does not tell its story quite unambiguously, fails only from the nature of the subject; and the Sacrifice of Lystra beautifully proves Raffaelle's study of the antique, as well as his fine sense of classical arrangement.

The master's works not yet named, exhibit the same versatility of adaptation.

He discovered the extraordinary talents of Marcantonio Raimondi, the earliest of the great engravers, and, carefully training him, drew numerous designs expressly for his use, which were speedily dispersed in engravings through all Europe. His compositions of this class embrace the most various subjects;—many scripture histories; saintly legends, like that of the martyrdom of St Felicitas; fanciful inventions, such as the sketches called Dreams; classical history or legends, exemplified in the beautiful Marriage of Roxana and the Calumny of Apelles. He ventured yet farther into the regions of classical fable in those designs for scenes from the tale of Cupid and Psyche, which, executed principally or

wholly by his scholars, still survive in fresco on the walls of the Roman palace called the Farnesina.

Oil-paintings, said to be his, and many of them possessing very high qualities, are scattered through all the galleries of Europe. Their numbers become incredible when we reflect on his short life and his labours in the Vatican, and are yet farther discredited by the whimsical frequency of duplicates, since several of his pieces occur in three, four, or more repetitions. A few of these are the master's genuine and unassisted works; some may have been chiefly painted by his pupils and finished by him, an arrangement common enough among busy artists in every age down to our own; others are clearly paintings executed by his scholars from his designs; and most of the duplicates may have been copies made by other artists from his original pictures, in the way of practice, or for the purpose of sale.

Raffaelle's oil-paintings either are portraits or represent sacred subjects.

The most celebrated of the former class are the portraits of his two papal patrons and of his mistress. That of Julius II. is inimitable as a characteristic likeness of the stern, ambitious, military old bishop.* The picture representing Leo X. attended by the Cardinals de' Rossi and Giulio de' Medici, unites with great force of expression a glow of colour and deceptive depth of chiaroscuro, for which the painter's successors testified their admiration by inventing a foolish anecdote.† The most youthful portrait of the Fornarina or Baker's Daughter, is the carefully painted figure of the Tribune in Florence, bearing the date of 1512. Two other likenesses of the same female were executed, partly at least, by his own hand, and are in the palaces Barberini and Sciarra at Rome.

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* The original is in the Pitti Palace; a duplicate in London, in the National Gallery. "In looking at it," says Vasari, "one got as frightened as if one had been looking at the pope himself."

† The original is in the Pitti Palace. In the Royal Gallery at Naples, is a celebrated copy by Andrea del Sarto, which, as Vasari relates (*Vita di Andrea*), was made purposely to cheat the Duke of Mantua, the owner of the original. The trick succeeded.

Raffaelle's sacred compositions chiefly consist of altar-pieces, and were frequently votive pictures offered to churches by private persons or public bodies. The subjects were usually dictated by the parties who gave the commission; and thus, besides the common scriptural scenes and groups, we find introduced the baptismal saints of the individual or of all his family, the patron-saint of the corporation or its city, or even portraits of the donors mingled with patriarchs, apostles, and angels, and beholding visions of the opened heavens. The taste which prescribed these anomalous groups was old and barbarous: a refined and exquisite feeling in the painter harmonized the jarring elements into lyrical grace and beauty. The admirable Saint Cecilia, who, surrounded by other holy persons, listens enraptured to the hymns of the seraphim, was painted for a chapel in a Bolognese church about 1516.* The heroically beautiful group of Saint Michael subduing Satan, was executed by order of Francis I. in 1517.† The Transfiguration, the most generally renowned of all the master's oil-paintings, was left unfinished at his death, and was worthy to terminate the labours of the prince of artists.‡ Besides these three pieces,—the powerfully pathetic Spasimo di Sicilia,§ and the Saint John in the Desert,||—there is perhaps no celebrated work among all Raffaelle's oil-paintings of

* It is in the Gallery of the Academy of Bologna, No. 152; and a copy, attributed to Giulio Romano, is in the Gallery of Dresden, Italian schools, No. 442.

† In the Louvre, No. 1187.

‡ Painted by order of the Cardinal Giulio de' Medici (afterwards Clement VII.), for a church in his see of Narbonne; presented by him in 1523 to the Roman church of San Pietro in Montorio; and now in the picture-gallery of the Vatican.

§ A picture of Christ bearing his Cross, painted for the Convent dello Spasimo at Palermo, and carried off by Philip IV. to Spain, whither, after having visited the Louvre in 1810, it has returned.

|| One example, usually supposed the original, is in the Tribune at Florence; others, with slight differences in arrangement and considerable dissimilarity in drawing and colour, are frequent. In the Academy of Bologna, No. 210; in the Louvre, No. 1047; in the Gallery of Berlin, No. 254, &c.

sacred subjects, in which the principal figure is not the Virgin Mary.

In the simplest class of pictures falling under this last description, we have the Virgin and Child alone, or with the infant Saint John, composing the groups to which the Italians confine the name of Madonna. In a second class, the Mother and Infant are surrounded by other figures, such as the Joseph and the Elizabeth, forming Holy Families. In a third class, which embraces most of the votive pictures, the Virgin and Child are exhibited in glory, as a vision of heaven, seen and adored by mortals or glorified saints. Of pieces belonging to one or another of these three classes, and painted by Raffaelle after his arrival in Rome, there exist, in various galleries, as many at least as sixteen or eighteen undoubted originals. In the Italian collections the most celebrated are, the Madonna of Foligno,* the Madonna della Seggiola, and the Madonna dell' Impannata;† in England the groups called La Belle Vierge and La Vierge au Linge;‡ in Spain, the Virgin au Poisson (al Pez); and in Germany, the Madonna di San Sisto at Dresden.§

No earthly conceptions can express so beautifully as these pictures of Raffaelle the Catholic idea of the Virgin-Mother.|| An unquestionable likeness pervades all of

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* Commissioned about 1512 by the ecclesiastic Sigismondo Conti (whose portrait appears in the picture), for the church of Ara Celi on the Capitol; thence removed in 1565 to the Convent of Sant' Anna in Foligno, and now in the gallery of the Vatican.

† Both in the Pitti Palace;—of the former several repetitions.

‡ Both in the Stafford Gallery, from the Orleans Collection.

§ Painted in one of Raffaelle's latest years, for the high-altar of the church attached to the monastery of San Sisto at Piacenza. According to some authorities, however, it was originally intended to be carried, as a kind of banner, in processions of a religious brotherhood.

|| Thy image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven, the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in Thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!
Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Sketches, Part II.

them, a likeness even in features; but the similarity is most striking in that bland purity of expression which, amidst much variety in the leading idea of the different groups, rules supreme over all.—In the Madonna della Seggiola, the Virgin is upon earth, in her house and chamber, with the infant Christ and Baptist. She is the Mater Dolorosa; the arrows have entered into her soul. Over the whole composition, which is a simple group of half-figures, calmness dwells; but through it there breaks a chastened meditative sorrow. That sad feeling speaks from the holy Mother's eyes, so deep, so mysterious, so magical; it speaks from the lovely head, so caressingly declining; it speaks from the embrace with which she folds her infant to her breast. The figure of the Saviour is instinct with the same sentiment which other artists have indicated accessorily, by painting the child asleep and dreaming upon his cross. It is not grief or fear that dwells in those dove-like eyes, but an absorbed reflectiveness: he is heedless of the caress of his mother, and of the speechless adoration with which the infant John gazes up at him, clasping his hands over the cross of reeds.—The Madonna of Foligno is the Virgin of Intercession. The scene in the lower part of the picture has a landscape and distant church; while in the foreground, the Preacher of the Wilderness, clad in his camel-skin, looks out upon us with calm assurance, and points to the vision which hovers overhead; an angel-child, with upturned face, is full of placid pleasure; Saint Jerome presents the aged priest who gave the picture to the church; and opposite to these two kneels Saint Francis, whose pale features, as he gazes up into heaven, kindle with a faith, and hope, and affection, that are among the divinest images ever given to art by passion and imagination. In the sky above, sits the glorified Virgin with the Child. Both bend down to their worshippers; and, in the beautiful countenances of both, we trace the pitying sympathy of their earthly nature, the majestic meekness of their celestial exaltation.—The grand Madonna of Dresden is of a higher strain. The curtain which, painted in

the picture, flanks the figures on each side, significantly marks the subject as a mystery, a lifting up of the veil which is supposed to hide the glory of the Queen of Heaven. The action has no scene, no footing on earth: floating among the clouds, angels and glorified saints adore the Mother and her Son. From the foot of the picture look up two half-seen figures of lovely cherub-infants, in calm and unimpassioned worship. At each side kneels a saint: on one hand a youthful female martyr; on the other an aged Roman bishop. The beautiful maiden turns away from the splendour of the opening vision, to look, softly smiling, on the angel-children: the venerable priest wears his white tunic and gold-weaved robe; but the triple mitre, the ensign of power, is laid at his feet, and the old man's gray and crownless head is turned upwards motionless and adoring. Above, from amidst a throng of cherub-faces shining through the golden beams of the dawning, issues the Holy Mother, bearing in her arms the Divine Child. Her attitude is inconceivably majestic: she treads not on the cloud; it bears her forward. Her youthful head is loveliness become divine; the sweet countenance is quietly and solemnly happy; trouble has touched the deep eyes, but left scarcely a shadow there; and on the features dwell grace to men, and love to the Holy Infant, who, reposing on her bosom, looks forward with prophetic eyes, too deeply expressive for any childhood but that of divinity incarnate, and foreseeing agony and final triumph.

THE ROMAN AND FLORENTINE SCHOOLS AND THEIR BRANCHES.

Throughout the whole of Middle and Lower Italy, as well as in most provinces of the north, the character of art during the sixteenth century was determined by the influence of Michel Angelo and Raffaelle. From all quarters the artists flocked to Rome and Florence, to study the frescoes of the Vatican or the cartoons of

Leonardo and Buonarroti; and the numerous works executed in the various towns possess no such marked character as would entitle us to distinguish any class of painters in this period (except the Venetians) as being more than pupils in the two great schools.

The Roman school was the most deeply imbued with the spirit of its master, but it was also the most evanescent. For, though its artists, the immediate pupils of Raffaelle, having been scattered on the sack of the papal city in 1527, diffused its principles over the whole peninsula, their influence did not survive themselves.

By far the greatest of them was Giulio Pippi, commonly called Giulio Romano, Raffaelle's friend, assistant, and favourite scholar (1492—1546). During his master's life, in the works he executed for him, he caught with wonderful liveliness his spirit and tone of sentiment; and his oil-paintings, in particular, are scarcely distinguishable from those of the former, except by their darker and heavier colouring. After his teacher's death, Giulio formed at Mantua a numerous school; and, with their assistance, executed those works which establish his fame as an original inventor. He exhibited remarkable boldness both of design and execution, added to a versatility which passed with equal ease from Scripture histories to the Titanic legends, and from these to the most licentious themes of classical mythology. His oil-paintings are to be seen in many collections; and his great frescoes,—the Psyche, the War of the Giants, and other fables,—have not yet quite mouldered from the walls of the palace of the Tè, close to the gates of Mantua.

Another pupil of Raffaelle, Gianfrancesco Penni, named Il Fattore, assisted a third, Polidoro Caldara da Caravaggio, in transferring Roman art to Naples; and in Bologna the style was planted by Bartolommeo Ramenghi, called Bagnacavallo, and by Innocenzio Francucci da Imola. From these two, and from Giulio, the Bolognese school received the Abate Francesco Primaticcio, whose boldness of hand and versatility of genius procured

him wealth and ecclesiastical rank in France. Benvenuto Tisi, named Il Garofalo, whose numerous easel-pictures display a peculiar, but not unpleasing mannerism, settled at Ferrara, but was rivalled there by a greater artist, Dosso Dossi, whose study of the Roman masters was corrected by a residence in Venice.* Perino Buonaccorsi del Vaga established in Genoa another branch of the same school, in which his most celebrated native pupil was Luca Cambiaso. Into Milan, where Leonardo's style yet flourished, the Roman manner was introduced by Gaudenzio Ferrari.

In the mean time there were three Tuscan painters, whose spirit was more independent. The first, the friend and instructor of Raffaelle's youth, was, though with increased breadth and boldness, still in essentials a follower of Leonardo. This was the friar Bartolommeo della Porta (1469—1517), whose altar-pieces are to be seen in Florence, where is also his majestic Saint Mark in the ducal gallery, a picture universally known. The second, Andrea Vannucchi, usually called Andrea del Sarto (1488—1530), borrowed little or nothing from Michel Angelo, but much from Leonardo, and, oddly enough, a good deal at one time from the meagre drawing of Albert Durer. Andrea's frescoes in Florence, especially his Madonna del Sacco in the cloister of the Servites, are his most celebrated works; and the grace and nature of these, with the excellent chiaroscuro of his oil-paintings, make partial amends for his want both of invention and of deep feeling. The third artist was the Sienese Giovanni Antonio Razzi, known by the name of Il Soddoma (1479—1554), a man of profligate life, who, to the deep twilight colouring of Leonardo, united a very fine sense of form, and an alternate power over the expressive and the graceful. His best works are the frescoes from the history of Saint Benedict, in a court of the Tuscan

* Dosso's best works (see Lanzi, Ferrarese School, epoch ii.), are in the Royal Gallery at Dresden; Italian schools, Nos. 16 to 22.

convent of Monte Oliveto Maggiore; and others decorate an apartment in the Roman Farnesina.

The imitation of Michel Angelo, however, obtained the predominance in Florence under the auspices of his two favourites, the Venetian Fra Sebastiano del Piombo and Danielle Ricciarelli da Volterra. Among his other earliest imitators in his native city, the most successful were Marcantonio Francabigio, Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, and Jacopo Carucci, called Da Pontormo. But the artist on whom Buonarroti's inspiration descended with greatest strength, was one who appears to have been personally unknown to him,—the Bolognese Pellegrino de' Pellegrini Tibaldi, whose frescoes at Bologna have been pronounced to exhibit, amidst grievous faults, much that is worthy of the great Florentine himself.*

Some portion of Michel Angelo's genius unquestionably shone upon those older Tuscans, like the refraction of an evening twilight; but his next followers groped in a darkness, through which they scarcely caught a glimpse of his grandeur and expression. At the head of these elaborate mannerists stood a man of various and lively talents, Giorgio Vasari of Arezzo, the celebrated biographer of the artists (1512—1574).†

Salviati and Vasari, after having established in Florence what they presumed to call the style of Michel Angelo, next propagated the same heresy in Rome; but were there opposed by equally incompetent imitators of Raffaelle, the two brothers Zuccari, and the Venetian Girolamo Muziano. Before the end of the century, however, when Roman mannerism was about to reach its height under Giuseppe Cesari, called the Cavaliere d'Arpino, there appeared two artists, not unworthy precursors of the Caracci. These were, Federigo Baroccio of Urbino (1528—1612), and Michel Angelo Amerighi of

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* See Fuseli; Lecture II.

† Among the other names in this decaying period of Florentine art, the following are the chief: Francesco de' Rossi, called Salviati; Jacopino del Conte; Angiolo Bronzino; Alessandro Allori, called Bronzino; Santi Titi; Bernardo Barbatelli, called Poccetti.

Caravaggio (1569—1609). The former, at one time a Raffaellist, has left more evident imitations of Correggio; and, if his forms are inaccurate, his expression seldom strong, and his rosy tints far beneath the chiaroscuro of his prototype, his best pictures have a pleasing grace, and his colouring a soft luxurious charm. Caravaggio, a man of savage temper, whose education, begun at Milan, was terminated by the study of Giorgione's works at Venice, was one of the most energetic of painters. For beauty or sublimity, indeed, he had neither eye nor heart: his saints and apostles are ruffians; his madonnas are viragos from the Trastevere; but his treatment of familiar and especially of revolting subjects is splendidly effective, from his broad simplicity of design, and from that veil of deep gloom which he throws over his scenes, broken only by concentrated bursts of meteoric light.

Contemporary with Baroccio and Caravaggio were some Florentine artists of a much purer class than their immediate predecessors, but yet scarcely deserving more than a passing notice. The best of these were, Lodovico Da Cigoli, Cristofano Allori, and Domenico Cresti, called Da Passignano.

TITIAN AND THE VENETIAN SCHOOL.

This fascinating school possessed in the sixteenth century a succession of brilliant artists, the greatest of whom were the five following:—Giorgio Barbarelli, called Il Giorgione (1477—1511); Tiziano Vecellio of Cadore, the prince of Venetian art (1477—1576); Jacopo Robusti, named Il Tintoretto (1512—1594); Jacopo da Ponte, called Bassano (1510—1592); and Paolo Caliari of Verona, known as Paul Veronese (1528—1588). The subjects of the Venetian pictures, although portraits are here more frequent than elsewhere, continue to be oftener sacred than secular; but their treatment is usually such as fits them for the walls of the palace-hall, rather than for the niche of the altar.

Giorgione and Titian, fellow-pupils under Giovanni Bellini, were at once the earliest and most original masters of the new school; and the glory of having first brought the theory and mechanism of colouring to their highest excellence, belongs, beyond controversy, to the former. It has been questioned whether Giorgione was acquainted with the works of Leonardo Da Vinci; but at any rate his chiaroscuro was essentially his own, and a wonderful improvement on that of the Florentine, for whose melting twilight he substituted a broad, transparent, energetic mass of shade, illuminated by powerful focuses of light, and enlivened by the richest tints and the most enchanting reflexes. The boldness of genius which his colouring displayed, was equally remarkable in the expressive countenances and grand draperies of his portraits.

His works are among the rarest and least authenticated of all Italian paintings. The best are in Venice; and far the noblest of these is the Ship bearing Saint Mark's body through the storm, a large composition in oil, which, fine in the expression of some particular figures, is, as a whole, one of the most impressive possible, from its uncommon grandeur of light and shade.*

Titian's earliest step was his imitation of Giorgione; but before he was thirty years old he had completely formed that original manner of his own, over which he retained the mastery till he died in his hundredth year. His style is essentially his own in all its changes,—from that timid observation of nature which made him for one short period a copyist of Albert Durer, down to the perfected idealism which reigns in his greatest works. Its character, however, is determined, not by the prominence of one feature, but by the harmony of many; and it is easier to name the excellencies which his best pictures want than those they possess. His great technical merit is his unequalled skill of colouring; through which he produces,

In the School of Saint Mark. Consult Fuseli.

from the simplest materials, effects at once the most delightful and the most faithful to nature, effects which seem to be borrowed from the broad golden sunshine, cheerful, brilliant, and exhilarating. But this quality is not more characteristic than is that aristocratic air which inspires his figures, and stamps every one of his heads as that of a Venetian noble. His inimitable colouring, and his nobility of tone, are common to almost all his works; and many of them possess other excellencies in but a confined measure. His style of design, though often excellent in figures of women and children, is seldom of the first order, and in his men is often positively poor: his composition is much seldomer faulty; and in the beautiful fragments of scenery which he so frequently introduces as backgrounds, he was the true founder of modern landscape-painting. Even in expression he sometimes rises above his ordinary level; and there are a few paintings of his which, treating ambitious subjects, leave as little to be desired in addition to their powerful sentiment as in correction of their fine composition and faultless colouring.

Titian's portraits, which made him the associate of the greatest princes in his time, from Charles V. downwards, are the fairest specimens of his genius. They are scattered through all the great galleries of Europe; and his sacred and mythological compositions in oil are equally common. Of these Italy possesses comparatively few, and of his frescoes none, if we except some insignificant wrecks at Padua. Venice contains more of his oil-paintings than any other Italian city; and the list includes several of his best works. The Assumption of the Virgin, from the church of the Frari, was one of his earliest efforts in his highest style.* Three of his pictures under one roof, the Abel, the Abraham, and David, unite his most splendid colouring with very fine drawing of the nude figure;† and the masterpiece of the

* In the gallery of the Accademia delle Belle Arti: Sala delle Funzioni, No. 1.

† In the Sacristy of the church of La Salute.

artist, a work equally admirable for colouring, for powerful expression, and for the composition of its animated group and picturesque landscape, is the Murder of Saint Peter Martyr in the forest of Barlassina.*

Giorgione's early death, and Titian's watchful jealousy, prevented both from forming pupils; but their works immediately became the subjects of imitation. One of the first scholars whom the latter artist's dread of competition drove from his studio, was Jacopo Robusti, a dyer's son. The genius and energy of this imaginative young man, overcoming poverty and every other obstacle, acquired for him, by a few works executed in the vigour of life, a fame which the defects visible in a long series of rapidly-dashed pieces were not sufficient to diminish. Tintoretto is the most inventive and passionate, but also the most unequal and faulty of the great Venetians. He wrote over the door of his mean workshop, "The design of Michel Angelo, and the colouring of Titian;" and he neglected no means of improvement in either department of art, by the study of antiques, of models, of anatomy, and by experiments on artificial lights. He sacrificed grace to animation and energy, and correctness of composition to vastness and complication; and his rage for experiment led him to practices which, long ere now, have reduced most of his pictures to lamentable decay.

Most of Tintoretto's numerous oil-paintings are still in Venice. None of them goes so far towards uniting the Venetian tints and chiaroscuro with the Roman design and power of expression, as the picture of Saint Mark's Miracle of the Slave.† The Feast of Cana in the church of the Salute, is another picture of the first order: and the Last Judgment,‡ a work of youth, and the Paradise,§ a production of advanced age, are similar in

* In the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo.

† From the School of S. Mark: now in the Academy; Sala delle Funzioni, No. 24.

‡ In the church of Santa Maria dell' Orto.

§ In the Doge's palace: Hall of the Great Council: on canvass; 30 Venetian feet by 74.

their vastness of conception and the magnificence which belongs to parts of both. His powers, however, are most suitably estimated from a visit to the School of San Rocco, the apartments of which still contain numerous pictures, from the Scriptures and the legend of the saint, on which the artist spent thirty years of his life. The masterpiece not only of this series, but of the master, is the celebrated Crucifixion, whose strength of tragic expression, and tremendous chiaroscuro, compel us to forget all its perplexity of composition and all its faults in taste and costume.

Although all the other Venetian painters formed themselves on the works of the three great masters, yet two more, Paolo Veronese and Bassano, possessed far too much originality to be set down as mere imitators. When Paolo, neglected at home, emigrated to Venice, Titian and Tintoretto became his models; but he soon aimed successfully at forming on their elements a style of his own, marked by yet richer ornament, by a bold and rapid handling, and a peculiar transparency in the lights of the drapery; while the spirit of his pieces, if it be seldom lofty or solemn, has a peculiar liveliness which almost reaches the comic. His figures, in allegorical groups or biblical histories, are always alike, always Venetians of his own age:—his Europa coquets with the transformed Jupiter; his Pharaoh's daughter, a lady of fashion attended by waiting-maids, black dwarfs, and Swiss guards, leaves her carriage to saunter indolently on the river's banks; his celebrated suppers of Cana, of Matthew, and of Simon, are immense collections of spirited historical portraits.* Bassano's deep and delightful colouring would of itself be insufficient to maintain a reputation, which is not supported by power of invention, expression, or drawing, and is degraded by monotony and mannerism. But this artist is remarkable for

* Of Paolo's four "Suppers," the most celebrated, the Supper of Cana, 32½ feet by 23½, and containing about 130 figures, has, since 1797, been in the Louvre (No. 1151).

having introduced into Italian painting that very same mode of treatment, familiar or even vulgar, which had once intruded into Florence, and afterwards found its perfection in the Netherlands. He delighted especially in painting animals, figures in a bending attitude, and household furniture; and his favourite subject was the Adoration of the Shepherds.

If it were necessary to enumerate all the Venetians of the sixteenth century who have left excellent pictures, the list would be a long one. A few only of the higher names can be set down. Besides Sebastian del Piombo and Giovanni da Udine, assistants respectively of Michel Angelo and Raffaelle, Giorgione had three very successful imitators of greater original talent. These were, Francesco Torbido, surnamed Il Moro, Jacopo Palma the elder (Palma Vecchio), and Giovanni Antonio Licinio, called Da Pordenone. Titian's most celebrated followers were,—Bonifazio, whose works are often mistaken for his,—Andrea Schiavone,—and a greater artist than either, Paris Bordone, who derived much also from the study of Giorgione's works. Bassano's style was adopted by several members of his own family; and among Paolo's imitators the best was his son Carlo, commonly called Carletto.

CORREGGIO.

Ill-vouched traditions represent the life of this most poetical artist as having been spent in poverty, and closed amidst the agonies of a broken heart. But though we know very few authentic details of his history, it is at least certain that he never received patronage so lucrative as that which made Titian a Spanish grandee. We are left in doubt whence he derived his earliest knowledge of the art of his times, and we cannot trace him farther back than to the school of Mantegna's followers at Mantua. His broadness of manner, and his learning in sacred costume as well as in composition, would seem to indicate a partial acquaintance at least

with the works of the Roman masters; but, though the point is doubtful, it is highly improbable that he ever saw Rome. With snatches of imperfect instruction and fits of cold encouragement, his warm and lucid genius formed for itself a style the most original and delightful. The ruling idea of his mind was harmony: to its attainment every other principle of art became subservient; and the effect which his mode of treatment produces is perfectly magical. His figures float in a sunset atmosphere, through whose warm translucency the weakest or most ordinary forms gleam with borrowed loveliness;—his lines, studiously modelled on that union of convex with concave curves, which has been fancifully pronounced to contain the principle of beauty, never break abruptly through the veiling medium which encompasses them;—and his expression in his highest works is either that of celestial happiness or that of softened sorrow.

Of Correggio's genuine works, Italy has lost nearly all the best, and duplicates or copies are as common as in the case of the other great artists. One of his earliest undoubted specimens is his votive picture called the Saint Anthony,* which exhibits a stiffness much like that of the preceding century, and was painted in 1512, when he was eighteen years old. A very few other examples lead us on to his grandest style, as exhibited in several pieces of uncertain date, which now adorn the same room with the Saint Anthony.† Our own country possesses several first-rate works of this artist, one of which, the Ecce Homo, is most admirable, both for the master's peculiar characteristics, and for its deep and melting pathos.‡ His Weddings of Saint Catherine, extant in

* In the Royal Gallery of Dresden; Italian Masters, No. 501.

† Dresden Gallery: Italian Masters (Hall of Raffaelle); the Saint George, No. 506; the Saint Sebastian, No. 502; the Physician, No. 503; the Meditating Magdalen, No. 504.

‡ In the British National Gallery;—which also has his Mercury teaching Cupid to read in presence of Venus; his Christ praying in the Garden (or a copy, a duplicate being in the gallery of the Duke of Wellington); and the companion of this latter picture, a Holy Family, in which the Virgin is occupied in dressing the infant.

several repetitions, and in at least two essentially different forms, are equally fine, especially that of the Louvre.* To the year 1527 belongs the completion of his renowned Notte, which represents the Nativity of our Saviour watched by the shepherds, and illuminated by the faintly breaking dawn in the distance and by the glory of the Holy Child in the centre of the piece.† The year 1530 produced for Charles V., besides the Danae now lost, those two voluptuous compositions, the Leda and the Io, the latter of which is the most poetically rich of all the master's works.‡ To nearly the same date with these last pieces belong two oil-pictures which are still in Parma, the Madonna della Scodella, and the celebrated Saint Jerome.§ In the latter, cherubs present to the Infant and his Mother the learned Saint with his translation of the Scriptures; and the Magdalen, one of the tenderest and loveliest creations of art, kneels and kisses the Saviour's feet.

Parma likewise possesses Correggio's most extensive and distinguished works, his only surviving frescoes. The earliest of these, whose genuineness however has been severely questioned, covers the walls of a chamber in a building once a nunnery of S. Paul, and represents mythological subjects. The two greater works are,—the Ascension of Christ in the cupola of San Giovanni,—and the Assumption of the Virgin in that of the Cathedral. One must study these remarkable monuments before forming any adequate notion either of the master's mechanical skill, especially in foreshortening on the ceiling (an experiment which he was the first to try), or of the æsthetical effect which he is capable of producing.

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* In the Royal Gallery at Naples, Capi d' Opera, No. 31; and in the Louvre, No. 953.

† Dresden Gallery, No. 505.

‡ The Leda, in the Royal Gallery at Berlin, Part I. No. 107; the Io, much injured, in the same collection, No. 109; a duplicate or copy at Vienna.

§ In the Gallery of the Accademia di Belle Arti, No. 2, and No. 1; a noted copy of No. 1, in the Stafford Gallery.

Among the followers of Correggio in his own century, it is enough to name Francesco Mazzuoli, surnamed Il Parmigianino (1504—1540). This artist founded, on the union of the Roman manner with that of his great model, a style of his own, full of force, grace, and richness. His boldness of drawing sometimes produces exaggeration and grimace, and his gracefulness is often affectation; but few of his pieces want redeeming points, and some of his best are masterpieces of a very high order. His fresco of Moses breaking the Tables, in the Steccata at Parma, is grand, though somewhat extravagant; his easel-painting of the Santa Margherita was one of the favourite studies of the Caracci;* and his Dream of Saint Jerome, magnificently conceived and splendidly coloured, is far superior to either.†

SCULPTURE.

The history of modern Italian sculpture is a subject over which one feels but little desire to linger, upon quitting the delightful field of Italian painting. Till we reach our own time and that immediately preceding it, we have the mortification of seeing, one after another, men of high genius engaged in the attempt to establish art on a footing disowned by nature. The most richly-endowed minds which cultivated sculpture during the last three centuries, those of Michel Angelo and Bernini, were precisely those that did the greatest injury.

MICHEL ANGELO.

The character of this great man's sculpture was as vast, as strong, as eagerly bent on the exhibition of science and the representation of violent action, as were his wonderful paintings; but the plastic art was still less fitted than the pictorial, for being guided by these principles uncontrolled. Though he adored the antiques for their anatomy, he was blind to their beauty and

* Pinacoteca di Bologna, No. 116; Catalogue 1829.
† In the British National Gallery.

repose: his own ideal was a ruder one, which neither his skill nor that of any other was qualified fully to express; and yet his vigour and feeling do in a few instances overcome all material obstacles, leading him to the very verge of sublimity, and not far from the true path of art.

His purest works are those of his youth, executed while his imagination was still filled by the Grecian statues, which, with Ghirlandajo's other pupils, he had studied in the gardens of the Medici. There is much antique calmness in the fighting groups on the Bas-relief which, preserved by the Buonarroti family in Florence, is the earliest of his known specimens; and his Bacchus with the young Faun in the Ufizj, an effort of his twenty-fourth year, possessing indifferent and somewhat inaccurate forms, approaches, in its softly waving lines and gentleness of expression, nearer to the Greek than any other work of its author. The Pietà of S. Peters is characterized, especially in the figure of the Mother, by much of the same temper, which is not lost even in the colossal David of the Florentine Piazza del Granduca. In the unfinished group of the Virgin and Child, in the chapel of the Depositi of San Lorenzo at Florence, the bold forms of the infant are Herculean, and in the master's strongest style; but the mother is simple, and not quite unlike the milder spirit of his youth. In the group of the Palazzo Vecchio, called "Victory," in which a young man with strained exertion forces down an aged one, Buonarroti's unfortunate ambition of display and strength is shown more characteristically than in any of his other works. The Christ bearing his Cross, in the Roman church of the Minerva, strong, correct, learned in its forms, and in its expression ordinary even to meanness, is an equally striking proof with the Judge of the Sistine chapel, how alien the artist's mind was to the contemplation of mild divinity.

His genius had freer scope in the three greatest of his works: the Monument of Pope Julius II., and the Tombs of Julian and Lorenzo de' Medici. The first of these, planned by the old priest himself with his charac-

teristic boldness and magnificence, but curtailed in its execution by the parsimony of his heirs, furnished occupation to the artist, at intervals, during many years. Statues merely blocked out, which were intended to belong to it, are now in the gardens of the Pitti Palace; two slaves are in the Louvre; the remainder of the monument, being the only part that was finished by the master, consists of the celebrated sitting figure of Moses, in the Roman church of San Pietro in Vincoli. The lawgiver of the Hebrews, a massy figure in barbaric costume, with tangled goat-like hair and beard, and horns like Ammon or Bacchus, rests one arm on the tables of the law, looking forward with an air of silent and gloomy menace. The strength of the work is unquestionable; its value as being, with the Victory, the most characteristic of its author's works, is equally clear; its sublimity admits of greater doubt. The tombs of the two Medici,* finished earlier than the Moses, are works of a far higher and purer strain; being really the finest that Michel Angelo ever produced. Upon each of the two sarcophagi rests a sitting figure in armour, the likeness of the dead man who reposes within. On each side of Lorenzo is a reclining statue, the one representing Twilight, the other Dawn; and Julian's tomb is in like manner flanked by the recumbent figures of Night and Day. The statue of Lorenzo is a fine and simple portrait: that of Julian has scarcely ever been surpassed for its air of dignified and thoughtful repose. The Dawn is a majestic female; the Twilight is a grand male figure, looking down. The Day is unfinished, but fine,—a bold male form; the Night is a drooping, slumbering, sad-looking female.

MINOR SCULPTORS.

The other names of the century are mere satellites to that of Michel Angelo. A few artists, his contemporaries or seniors, resisted for a while the influence of his

* Both in the Cappella de' Depositi of San Lorenzo, in Florence. These two princes were grandsons of the great Lorenzo.

example, which, however, soon extended to all the younger men. Among the adherents of the older style, the best was Andrea Contucci, called Da Sansovino, a scholar of Antonio Pollajuolo. His works, which were numerous not only in Italy but in Portugal, have much of the ancient chastity and simplicity. His group of the Baptism of Christ, on the principal gate of the Florentine Baptistery, has great purity of form and nobility of expression; and there is infinite simplicity with much feeling in the group of the Virgin, Child, and Saint Anna, in Sant' Agostino in Rome. His most extensive undertaking was the sculpture which was to adorn the exterior of the Holy House in the great church at Loreto, though he himself finished only one compartment in bas-relief, figuring the Annunciation. Francesco Rustici, an ardent student of the works of Leonardo Da Vinci, likewise kept aloof from the prevailing fashion; but, neglected by his Florentine countrymen, he emigrated and died in France. Almost his only works in Italy are bronzes on a gate of the Florentine Baptistery, being figures of a Pharisee, a Levite, and the Baptist, three of the best statues of the age, and possessing great ease with much dignity. He was the master of Baccio Bandinelli, whose performances force themselves into notice by their imposing masses and the boldness of their invention, but want almost all other merits. The most prominent works of this envious and presuming Florentine are in his native city. Of the remaining Tuscans in the early part of the century, it is enough to name Baccio da Montelupo, Benedetto da Rovezzano, and Pietro Torrigiano, the sculptor of the monument of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey.

Among the best of Michel Angelo's Tuscan scholars were Fra Montorsoli and Raffaelle da Montelupo: his style influenced Niccolò, called Il Tribolo, and Giovanni dall' Opera; and his anatomical display, with a mixture of the recent affectation of grace, made up the character of the works executed by the goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini. This man, however, is now less celebrated for his skilful

works of art than for his autobiography, so amusingly descriptive of the fierce nature of the man, and of the agitations which distracted society throughout his age. To the latter part of the century, but not to the school of Michel Angelo, belongs Bartolommeo Ammanato, best known as an architect, of whose colossal statues the Florentine Piazza still possesses one.

In Venice, Buonarroti's example formed the style of Jacopo Tatti, called the younger Sansovino. His best sculptures are the bas-reliefs of the Burial and Resurrection of the Saviour, in a door of the Doge's palace; and another at Padua, representing Saint Anthony restoring a drowned girl to life. Among the Lombards, by far the most distinguished was Guglielmo della Porta, Buonarroti's pupil, whose tomb of Paul III., in the tribune of S. Peters, is not unworthy of his master either for its merits or its defects.

But the vicious tendencies of art were in no instance so strikingly displayed as in the greatest sculptor, after Michel Angelo, whom the century produced. This was a Fleming, called by the Italians Giovanni Bologna (1524—1608), who came into their country while a youth, and spent most of his days at Florence, forming himself on Buonarroti's manner in its exaggerated display of science, but incorporating with it an affected grace, entitling him to be considered the founder of that style which ruled the two succeeding centuries. Frequent excellence of composition, and general liveliness of expression, were insufficient to make amends for the faults of this new school; and the universal facility of hand made matters only worse, by increasing, especially in Tuscany, the inclination to uniformity and mannerism. But the animation of Giovanni's best works is delightful. His crucifixes and other small bronzes and marbles were numerous; and among his fountains the most celebrated is that with the standing Neptune in the great square of Bologna. His genius is most favourably estimated from the vivacity and grace of his small bronze, the Flying Mercury in the Ufizj, and from the beauty of form, the

energy and expression, of his group called the Sabine Rape in the Loggia de' Lanzi. The square which contains the latter has also the artist's excellent equestrian figure of Cosmo I.

To about the year 1598 belongs the exquisitely graceful and touching statue of Saint Cecilia, in the church dedicated to her in the Trastevere of Rome. It is the youthful work of Stefano Maderno, a sculptor otherwise obscure. The supposed body of the martyr had just been discovered in its sarcophagus, lying upon its face in the attitude in which the statue lies; and the purity of design in Stefano's work has been attributed to the impression wrought on him by the sight of the holy relics.

ARCHITECTURE.

To all criticisms on this branch of modern art, one observation should, in fairness, be prefixed. No country in Europe possesses so many fine architectural monuments as those which have adorned Italy since the end of the fifteenth century. The Roman church and state, amidst all their vicissitudes, have proved steady though often undiscerning patrons to this pursuit; and the erection of Saint Peters was an undertaking unparalleled in Europe. Tuscany and Lombardy have done much, even under the pressure of the new relations in which modern politics have placed them; and the kingdoms of Naples and Piedmont have also been enriched by many splendid buildings. Venice and Genoa continued, long after the close of the middle ages, to cherish architecture with remarkable liberality and taste.

The architectural history of this illustrious age may be best commenced with Rome, where the art, under the Popes Julius and Leo, forms a link between its own time and the past. The character of the style which Bramante and others had brought with them from Florence, was, in its details, derived with considerable accuracy from the ancient Roman, not from the Greek, which was neither studied nor known. In its

composition likewise, the new Florentine manner, especially in its churches, may be regarded as essentially formed on the classical Roman. Alterations, however, were required to answer the new purposes of the art; and the invention of those changes was the great problem, which the masters of the early part of the sixteenth century in Rome were able to solve only in part. A little later, the members of the Palladian school, in the north of Italy, were considered to have found the complete solution, in the formation of a style continuing to borrow all its elements from the old Roman, and adhering with purity to the details, but yet in its composition deviating from several of the classical principles, aiming at elegance rather than sublimity, and at convenience of arrangement rather than breadth of design.

Bramante and Peruzzi were beyond doubt the best architects in the early part of their century. The former, whose real name was Francesco Lazzari (1444—1514), worked chiefly in Rome, where several of his buildings still exist. The finest of his palaces is that of the Cancelleria. Its principal front, composed of a plain basement, supporting two successive stories, in each of which, between the rectangular windows, are coupled pilasters on pedestals, is simple and broad in its lines, and its general effect is very pleasing. The Palazzo Giraud, now Torlonia, in the Borgo Nuovo, is in the same style; and the beautiful little temple on the height at San Pietro in Montorio, is, with some faults, one of the best designed of all modern adaptations from the antique. Baldassare Peruzzi of Volterra (1481—1536), has left no works whose extent is worthy of his genius; but his two best edifices, both of them in Rome, are equal, perhaps superior, to Bramante's. His palace, or rather garden-house, called the Farnesina, is a building of excellent arrangement and proportions, and well harmonizing in character with its purpose as a villa. His Palazzo Massimi had both its oval shape and its narrow limits determined by the ground upon which it is built; but the effect of its Doric is finely massive; its façade is

peculiar in placing the columns and entablature in the basement, with a plain face above; and the internal court, with its vaulted colonnade, is very beautiful.

Among the other architects of Rome in Bramante's time, or soon after it, we find the names of Giulio Romano (whose chief works, however, were at Mantua), Raffaelle, and Michel Angelo. Raffaelle's feeling for the antique engaged him actively in planning and recommending architectural improvements in the city; but the few buildings actually erected from his designs, though chaste and well proportioned, are not worthy of his fame in painting. The best ascertained of them are these:—the Palazzo Stoppani, near Sant' Andrea della Valle; a pleasure-house in the garden of the Farnesina; and a chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo. Michel Angelo's undertakings in architecture, which he did not study professionally till his fortieth year, were of a more ambitious cast, and exercised, like all that he did, a powerful influence; although it cannot be said that his style was either chaste or beautiful, and in no instance can it be called even grand, except in his noble plan for S. Peters. In Florence he executed the Laurentian Library, and the New Sacristy or Sepulchral Chapel of San Lorenzo. His best monument, the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, among the Baths of Diocletian, has been disfigured by modern alterations; and some changes have been made on his most conspicuous work, the buildings in the square of the Capitol. To this celebrated group of edifices, we ascend by a flight of steps surmounted by a stone balustrade: in front stands the Palace of the Senator, a structure wanting decided character, but on the whole well arranged, and receiving some importance from its double projecting staircase, and its belfry, which was added after the great man's death. The lateral buildings,—the Palace of the Museum and that of the Conservatori,—are bad in themselves, heavy and ill-proportioned, particularly in their enormous cornices; while among their details we observe windows with broken circular pediments, over-

loaded with scrolls and other ornaments, in a style which but too soon found imitators every where, and of which the deformity does not belong wholly to Buonarroti.

His contemporary and rival in architecture, Antonio Picconi, who adopted the name of his maternal uncles, two older architects named Sangallo, executed, till 1546, fortifications in various provinces of Italy. His greatest work in civil architecture was the Farnese Palace in Rome, of which the principal front only and the two sides (excepting the huge cornice, which is Buonarroti's), now exhibit his design. The size is immense, and the aspect of the building solid and magnificent, with no glaring want of simplicity. But Sangallo's church of the Madonna of Loreto, in Trajan's forum, exhibits a style of broken lines and overcharged ornament, even more faulty than Buonarroti's Capitol. Giacomo Barozzi, called Vignola (1507—1573), was the best of the Roman architects in the latter part of this century. He was a profound student of the classical monuments; but his own style partakes less of the simplicity proper to the early artists of the century, than of the ornamental richness which distinguished his contemporary Palladio in the north. In Rome his most successful works are, the pleasing chapel of Sant' Andrea di Ponte Molle, and the adjoining mansion, now deserted and ruinous, called the Villa di Papa Giulio ; but his most picturesque edifice was the fortified Palace of Caprarola, on a rocky hill surrounded by defiles, near Ronciglione, about thirty miles from the city. Bartolommeo Ammanato, the sculptor, besides his beautiful Bridge of the Trinità, and the inner court of the Pitti Palace, both at Florence, has left us in Rome the excellent building of the Palazzo Ruspoli on the Corso. In Domenico Fontana, who, very late in the century, designed the aqueducts, the Lateran Palace, and the back elevation of the Lateran Church, we see the taste for clumsy proportions and overloaded ornament already carried to extravagance, although the general arrange-

ments are still good and judicious. At Naples Fontana executed the extensive Royal Palace. The Roman buildings of his frequent coadjutor, Giacomo della Porta, a Milanese, are much in the same taste with his own.

In passing to the north, we find at Florence the architecture of the painter Vasari, whose principal work there is the range of the Ufizj; and a better artist, Pellegrino Tibaldi, erected various buildings at Bologna, Genoa, and Milan. Genoa, however, owed not only its improved harbour, but most of its finest structures, to a Perugian, Galeasso Alessi. Verona was the birthplace of the famous Michele Sanmicheli, to whom the Italians attribute the invention of the modern system of fortification. His native town, besides some parts of its defences, received from him two or three chapels, five palaces, and two gates, whose beauty is highly celebrated. The merit of importing the modern architecture from the south into the Venetian provinces, is shared with him by an architect of weaker powers and less severe taste, Jacopo Sansovino, already noticed as a sculptor. He is best known in Venice, which abounds with his works, deformed however in many instances by later alterations. His most conspicuous buildings in that city are, the Zecca or Mint, and another once occupied as the Library of S. Mark, though now called the Palazzo Reale.

But the most widely known of all modern names in architecture, is that of Andrea Palladio of Vicenza (1518—1580). He did not stand alone, either in his ardent study of Vitruvius and of the ruins of Rome, or in his attempt to unite the elements of the antique Roman into a whole, which should be adapted to modern convenience by its facility of subdivision, and to modern taste by its richness of ornament; but he was quite unapproached in that delicacy of feeling and sobriety of judgment, which he added to his learning and invention. The best qualities in his style are, his sense of proportion, and his fine adaptation of parts to their proper use. His outlines

are forcible, and in their principal direction seldom broken, his pediments never; he is rarely chargeable with excess of ornament, but sometimes with unpleasing attempts at variety, such as his frequent addition of pedestals to his columns, and his introduction of shafts having different lengths on the same base. He uses all the five Roman orders, but most frequently the Ionic.

The most detailed description of Palladio's edifices would fail altogether to convey the pleasure which their elegance affords to the eye. They are chiefly in the Venetian territories, where most towns boast of possessing some work of his; and his native Vicenza is the best place for studying his palaces, as Venice is for the architecture of his churches. Among his Vicentine mansions, the most celebrated is the Rotonda of the Capri family, a villa on a beautiful hill, built in a square form with a portico on each side, and deriving its name from the circular saloon which forms its centre. The Olympic Theatre of Vicenza, a wooden erection in decay, is ingenious rather than beautiful. His ecclesiastical edifices have much less variety than his palaces: every specimen is brother to its neighbour, and most of them are chaste as well as beautiful.* His churches in Venice are numerous; but it is enough to name three: —San Francesco della Vigna,—San Giorgio Maggiore, whose lofty front is finer than the interior,—and the Redentore, in which the exterior, one of his best designs, is equalled by the simple disposition of the nave.

The Palladian style was one which could scarcely be trusted in any hands but the master's own. Abroad, he found a few excellent disciples; his own country gave him hardly any; and in the north of Italy, his

* "All Palladio's churches have one general disposition in front, —a pediment in the centre, supported on half columns, and a sloping roof on each side, resting on a smaller order, whose horizontal cornice is continued more or less perfectly in the intervals between the larger columns. The effect is always in some degree as if a great pediment over the smaller order had been cut away for the purpose of introducing the larger."—Woods' Letters of an Architect, vol. i. p. 272.

juniors in the same century could not even compete with their contemporaries in Rome, unless Vincenzo Scamozzi of Vicenza can be named as an exception. In Venice this architect built the Procuratie Nuove, the arcades of which, composing the south side of the Piazza of S. Mark, are pleasing and correct, though a little meagre; and his best church is that of San Niccolò de' Tolentini, in the same city, of which the interior is well-proportioned, and the front portico extremely classical, excepting the perforated tympanum of the pediment. One other Venetian architect would not deserve especial notice, but for the historical and poetical interest which belongs to some of his works. This is Giovanni da Ponte, who, shortly before the end of the century, built the oddly picturesque Bridge of the Rialto, and the ill-omened Bridge of Sighs, together with the handsome range of the New Prisons, which the fatal arch joins to the doge's palace.

CHAPTER III.

Italian Literature in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY :—*The Drama*—Establishment of the Opera—Comedy—Pastorals—The Improvised Comedy—Its Characters—*Epic Poetry*—The Adone of Marini—*Lyrical Poetry*—The Odes of Chiabrera—The Odes and Sonnets of Filicaja—Other Lyrists—The Bacco of Redi—*Burlesque Epics*—Tassoni and Others — *Prose Literature* — Boccalini — Gravina—Sarpi—Davila—*Science*—Galileo — Other Names. THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY :—*Physical Science*—Cirillo—Scarpa—Galvani—Volta—*Prose Literature*—Muratori—Maffei—Giannone — Denina—Tiraboschi—Lanzi—Minor Writers — *Miscellaneous Poetry*—The Ricciardetto—Frugoni—Pignotti—Cesarotti—Parini's Odes and Satire—Varano's Visions—*The Opera*—Metastasio's Works—*The Comic Drama*—Goldoni's Comedies—Gozzi's Dramatic Fairy-Tales — Albergati — Federici — *The Tragic Drama*—Alfieri's History and Character—His Works—*Political Science*—Retrospect—Beginnings of Political Economy in Italy—Political Philosophers in the Eighteenth Century—Vico's Philosophy of History—Pagano's Writings and Death—Genovesi's Lectures on Political Economy — Galiani's Dialogues on the Corn-Laws — Verri's Meditations on Political Economy—Beccaria on Criminal Law and Political Economy—Filangieri's Science of Legislation.

The Seventeenth Century.

IT has been said respecting this age in Italy, severely but not quite truly, that it cannot boast of any literary event which happened in it, except the formation of the opera. We have seen the first feeble steps of the musical drama in the end of the preceding era; and the subject is one which does not call for farther details.

The drama in its other branches was cultivated by a host of writers, whose numbers rivalled, if they did not surpass, those of the sixteenth century; but their works have, almost without exception, fallen into deserved neglect.* The serious drama turned back to those religious subjects which had employed it in the convents of the middle ages; and the Scripture and the Golden Legend furnished a multitude of plays, among which the "Adamo" of the Florentine actor Andreini is interesting to English readers, because it has been said that Milton, having seen or read it during his travels in Italy, took from it hints for the Paradise Lost.† Comedy at first displayed some invention, especially in a few pieces written by the well-known naturalist Giovanni Battista Porta; but it emerged from imitation of the Latin comedy only to fall into copies and translations from the Spanish. The pastoral dramas were numerous; and the best of them, "La Tanzia," composed by Michel Angelo Buonarroti, a nephew of the great sculptor, still preserves its place as one of the Tuscan classics. It owes, however, much of its charm to certain nice peculiarities of idiom, for whose appreciation foreign ears possess no sense.

The most curious dramatic event of this century was the perfecting of those improvised pieces, almost exclusively peculiar to the Italian stage, and called Commedie dell'Arte, in which the author did little more than sketch the outline, leaving the dialogue to be filled up by the dexterity of the performers. Such exhibitions were older than the written comedy; indeed the antiquaries endeavour to trace them to the mimes of the ancient Romans; but they did not till now reach their full development.

* Riccoboni (Histoire du Theatre Italien, 1727) has collected lists extending from 1500 to 1650. His number of dramatists is about 450; being 140 tragic, and 310 comic. The number of pieces, without reckoning the old mysteries and moralities, nor any of the pastoral dramas, is about 795, of which 235 are tragedies, and 560 comedies.

† See Ginguené (continuation, by Salfi), tome xii.; and Walker's Essay on Italian Tragedy.

In all of them were found the same leading personages, whose varieties in different provinces were changes in name rather than in nature. These characters were represented by masked actors, wearing dresses appropriated by fixed custom to each, and speaking the several local dialects. When the group was complete, its members were four in number;—the Pantalone, a good-natured, garrulous, Venetian merchant, who was usually father to one of the lovers in the piece; the Doctor, who was the other father, and, in his solemn pedantry as well as his scraps of bad Latin interspersed through his Bolognese jargon, parodied the legal sages of the great university;—the Arlecchino, a blundering Bergamasque servant, the Irishman of the play;—and the Capitano Spavento, or Captain Panic, a cowardly Spanish bully, through whose ridiculous Neapolitan dialect and the sufferings to which he was mercilessly exposed, the Italians vented their hatred for their foreign taskmasters. Additional personages which figured in some provinces along with the Arlecchino, and in others instead of him, were either doubles of his character or contrasts to it. Such were the Apulian Pulcinella in Naples, the Neapolitan Truffaldino in Venice, Giangurgolo and Coviello, Calabrian clowns, Brighella, a Ferrarese or Milanese, Beltramo, a Milanese, and Tartaglia, a stuttering simpleton. The waiting-maids, Arlecchino's sisters or mistresses, were Colombina, Smeraldina, or Spiletta; all of whom talked good Italian, as did the Amorosi or lovers, who completed the dramatis personæ.

The favourite poet of the age was the Neapolitan Giambattista Marini (1569—1625), whose chief work, the Adone, is in every respect a characteristic specimen of literature in his time. It is a narrative poem, detailing the love of Venus and Adonis, and the fate of the lover. Its spirit is mythological; its style is overloaded with ornament, affected and involved to a degree that often makes it almost unintelligible; and lyrical flights supply the place of dramatic energy and pathos. But

yet the abundance of imagery, and the vivid picturesqueness of description, that present themselves even on such a careless perusal as the Adonis now receives, are so striking as to inspire deep regret that endowments like Marini's should have been so wretchedly misapplied.

The lyrical poets succeeded better, and, with more or less of the prevalent false taste and obtrusive learning, several possessed genius which has placed their works in the rank of Italian classics. The greatest names among them are those of Chiabrera, Filicaja, and Redi.

Gabriello Chiabrera (1552—1638) may be reckoned either the last poet of the sixteenth century, or the earliest of the next. That fiery temper, which in his youth twice stained his hands with blood, was tamed down by years and solitude, so far as to make him an acceptable courtier of the Medici, the Gonzaga, the dukes of Savoy, and the anti-scientific Pope Urban VIII.; but it often finds vent in his poetical transports, and aids in forming that character of fervid, passionate inspiration, which is the spell that animates his verse. Though his ambition attempted every sort of poetry, his lyrics alone have maintained their fame; and among them the lofty odes which are classed in his works as "Canzoni Eroiche," are those to which his readers most willingly turn. Most of his canzoni are mere occasional poems of flattery; yet even in these it is pleasing to see with what delight he seizes on themes of former national greatness (where these could be safely opened), to shed a halo round the worthless idol of his courtly worship. The mock-tournaments and ball-playing of Florence recall the golden days of Lorenzo; the victories of the Venetians in Greece and its islands inspire pictures of a fancied fortress, in which, among the lagunes, Italian glory and liberty find their only shelter;* and the sea-fights of the Tuscan vessels with the Turkish corsairs, to which

* Canzoni Eroiche, No. 3:—To Vittorio Cappello, general of the Venetians in the Morea;—and elsewhere.

he dedicates fourteen animated odes, add to patriotic recollections the charm which lies in the emotion of gratified benevolence. Even through that mythological mist, in which he so often shrouds himself, there break frequent gleams of nature, in which we seem to look on life along with him, to gaze out at his side on his favourite object, the blue Mediterranean, on which the navies of Christendom ride, or the fishermen of his native Savona launch their boats from the rocky shore.

Vincenzo Da Filicaja, a noble Florentine (1642—1707), rose at once into court-favour and general celebrity, through his six Canzoni on the siege of Vienna by the Turks and its deliverance by John Sobieski in 1684. He had composed these odes in a rural retirement, to which he had been led by his contemplative and religious disposition, aided by that pride which would not permit a man of high birth to parade his poverty among the crowds of the ducal city. After the poet became a placeman, he became a courtier also; his works lost much of their bold freedom; and his early odes, with his six famous Sonnets and Canzone on the wretchedness of Italy, are his only works with which foreigners in general care to be acquainted. The grandeur of his pieces on the siege of Vienna* consists less in their invention, than in the profound strength of feeling which breathes through them, a feeling in which his yearning love for his country, finding a disguise in the common cause of Europe, is harmonized into religion by the devotional melancholy of the man, and by the Christian interest of his theme. All the odes, although exceedingly vigorous, and sometimes highly animated, are hymns in spirit, as more than one of them are likewise in form. Most of Filicaja's sonnets, too, are devotional; but a less contemplative emotion, an outpouring of sorrowful indignation alternating with bitter scorn, reigns in his patriotic sonnets and canzone.† The first sonnet, a lamentation

* Canzoni, 1-6. Opere, tom. i. p. 57-92; Firenze, 1819.
† Sonetti, 87-92. Canzone, 21, tom. i. p. 262-274.

over that "unhappy gift of beauty," which has made Italy for ages the victim of foreign ambition, is known to every one;* and another, in which the tone is that of indignant and prophetic reproach, is scarcely less striking.† There is great beauty as well as feeling in some of those poems which take their rise from circumstances in the writer's history; among which may be particularly instanced the canzone on leaving Florence for his seat at Figline; that addressed to Silence; and the picturesque and expressive poem in the Dantesque stanza, called The First Sacrifice.

Among the numerous writers of serious lyrical poetry, several of whom have left pieces possessing much merit (especially sonnets), the best were Fulvio Testi, à Ferrarese, and Alessandro Guidi of Pavia, who is said to have died of an apoplectic stroke caused by his discovering a gross typographical error in a splendid edition of one of his works. Guidi's purely lyrical pieces, even his celebrated Ode to Fortune, are disfigured by much of that academic pedantry on which alone the anecdote of his death could have been founded, and which his active share in the proceedings of the Roman Arcadia was too well calculated to foster.

Francesco Redi, a native of Arezzo (1626—1697), the court-physician in Florence, and even more celebrated in medical and physical science than in poetry, forms, by his "Bacco in Toscana," a link between the serious lyrical poets, and the broad humour of the burlesque rhymers. This poem, which is denominated a dithyrambic, is marked by an unchecked flow of playful fancy and gay enthusiasm, imparting to it an extremely original effect. It is a monologue in varied lyric verse, spoken or acted by the god Bacchus, who, returning from his Indian conquests, enters the gardens of the Medicean villa at

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* Italia! Italia! o tu cui feo la sorte
Dono infelice di bellezza.—Sonetto 87

† Dov' è, Italia, il tuo braccio? e a che ti servi
Tu dell' altrui?—Sonetto 88.

Poggio Imperiale, attended by Ariadne with the satyrs and the mænad nymphs. He drinks and makes his train drink, enumerates all the wines of Italy, giving each its character, feels the strength of the grape-juice, and passes through a dream of the most sportive intoxication, which closes in a flood of maudlin tears. At length he sinks exhausted on the turf, where the satyrs are already asleep, and the females dance around.

The other burlesque poems of the age are conceived in a style of humour much broader and coarser; and in all of them the wit depends too much on local and national peculiarities, to allow them to be rightly appreciated by foreigners. The most celebrated is the mock epic of the "Secchia Rapita," or Rape of the Bucket, by Alessandro Tassoni, which relates the story of an incursion by the poet's countrymen, the Modenese, into Bologna, about the same time with the capture of the unfortunate Enzio, Frederic the Second's son, when they carried off the bucket of a public well in the city. Francesco Bracciolini of Pistoia contested with Tassoni the honours of the new style, in his "Scherno degli Dei," where the heathen gods figure among the Tuscan peasantry, borrowing from them both their language and their sentiments. The Florentines are scarcely less vain of another poem belonging to the same class, the "Malmantile Racquistato" of the painter Lorenzo Lippi.

Among the prose works of the time, the critics and historians alone are remarkable. The critical notices which Trajano Boccalini threw into a dramatic form in his merrily malicious work, the "News-sheet from Parnassus," were followed in the end of the century by the grave æsthetical writings of the great lawyer Gian Vincenzo Gravina. It is worth while, also, to notice the introduction of literary journals in Italy, the first of which was published at Rome in 1668. The most able and useful of the numerous historians in this age, was the celebrated chronicler of the Council of Trent, the Venetian monk Fra Paolo Sarpi. No other works

of the same class in this period possess much literary importance, except the admirable history of the Civil Wars in France, by Arrigo Caterina Davila, a Paduan.

In natural science during this age, the Italians possessed several celebrated votaries, and one who ranks among the most illustrious in modern times, the Pisan Galileo Galilei (1564—1641). Galileo's scientific character lies beyond the limits of this sketch, and the circumstances of his persecution and imprisonment by the Inquisition are known to every one. His body was honourably buried in the church of Santa Croce at Florence, and his manuscripts, at first concealed and then lost, were partly recovered in 1730 by a gentleman of that city, to whom one of them had been presented as the wrapping of a sausage.* It would be wrong to omit all notice of Torricelli, who claims the invention of the barometer; Borelli, the author of the treatise on the Motion of Animals; the celebrated astronomer Cassini; and the mathematician Viviani.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

In this century Italian literature, gradually rising, at length occupied a place which, if not very high, was creditable as compared either with its own recent state, or with the contemporary position of other countries. It had more learning than in the preceding age, more science, more poetical invention, and a much purer poetical taste. Above all, it had an infinitely greater independence, force, and practical shrewdness of thought; it came, almost for the first time, into the common circle of European ideas; and its progress, especially in the last stage of the period, bore a cheering aspect of promise.

A few writers who first stepped forward amidst the turmoil that closed the age, must properly be considered as belonging to a more recent time; but, without

* Ginguené (continuation, by Salfi), tome xi. chap. 4, p. 208.

these, Italy possessed a sufficient number of distinguished men, precursors and not disciples of the Revolution, to make her eighteenth century matter of honourable self-gratulation.

Among the victims of the Neapolitan restoration in 1799, we shall find the virtuous Domenico Cirillo, the earliest Italian expounder of the Linnæan system, and not less distinguished for his medical works. In the latter department, Italy has been adorned, down to our own days, by the renowned disciple of the great Morgagni, the Pavian anatomist Antonio Scarpa, born in the province of Treviso. With his name stand those of two men who have revolutionised natural science; Luigi Galvani, a native and professor of Bologna; and Alessandro Volta of Como, professor of physics at Pavia.

History and antiquities were not less actively prosecuted. At the head of the antiquaries stood the indefatigable and honest Lodovico Antonio Muratori, the ducal librarian at Modena (1672—1750); and only second to him in the same class was the universally accomplished Marquis Scipio Maffei of Verona (1675—1755). The best historical writers of the century were the persecuted historian of Naples, Pietro Giannone, in the early part of the age, and in the later, the Piedmontese Abate Carlo Denina. Literature found her annalist in the sensible and industrious Bergamasc Girolamo Tiraboschi, who succeeded Muratori at Modena (1731—1794); and the history of Italian painting was comprised in a single work by the Jesuit Luigi Lanzi, a native of the district of Fermo (1732-1810). These were the most eminent names in history, antiquities, and criticism; but some injustice is done by omitting mention of several other authors in all these departments. Among miscellaneous prose writers it may be enough to specify Algarotti,—the Jesuit Bettinelli,—the eccentric Baretti, the friend of Burke and Johnson,—and Alessandro Verri, the author of the imaginative

Roman Nights, with whose brother we shall soon become better acquainted.

The inventive literature of the time was successful in many paths; but the very names of some men who have left pleasing compositions must be passed by.

The oldest poet we meet with is the canon Niccolò Fortiguerri, a Tuscan, whose "Ricciardetto," written playfully for a wager, is the last of the chivalrous poems in the style of Berni. In the first half of the century, no verses were so fashionable as the lyrics of the Genoese Innocenzo Frugoni, which, notwithstanding their elegance, are now most frequently referred to as illustrating the sickly taste of the academies, then in their dotage.

The last fifty years produced more vigorous thought with equal refinement. The Fables of the historian of Tuscany, Lorenzo Pignotti, are exceedingly admired by the Italians, who also rate very highly the translated Ossian, Homer, and original compositions, both in prose and verse, of the Abate Melchiorre Cesarotti, a Paduan. Another ecclesiastic, the Tuscan Giambattista Casti, is famous for his "Animali Parlanti," a fable in twenty-six cantos, his "Tre Giuli," a whimsical series of sonnets on the miseries of a paltry debt, and his gay but licentious novels. Giuseppe Parini, a native of the Milanese, (1729—1799,) would deserve more minute criticism than any of those already named. His force of reflection, and his finished elegance and melody, are exhibited in his odes and other minor poems; but his most celebrated work (on which indeed the Italians found for him a claim to be considered the inventor of a new species of satire), is his "Day," in which, under the ironical veil of instruction, he describes the weary and useless life led by a Milanese man of fashion. To the fabulist Bertola, and the lyrical poets Mazza, Bondi, and Cerretti, it is enough to allude; but it would be wrong to pass over so slightly Alfonso Varano, who, by his versified Visions, was the forerunner, in certain respects, both of Monti

and of Manzoni. His dream of the cloudy mount, upon which angels worship the bloody cross, is one of the grandest pictures in modern poetry.*

The Drama, however, long deeply sunk in Italy, and never high in merit there, had now become the stronghold of imaginative literature. Its honours were successively possessed during this century by three of the most generally celebrated authors of their country :—the Roman Abate Pietro Trapassi, known by the Greek translation of his name, Metastasio (1698—1782) ; the Venetian advocate Carlo Goldoni (1707—1793) ; and the Count Vittorio Alfieri of Asti in Piedmont (1749—1803. These men, following very different paths, contributed to render the drama a national and original branch of literature. Metastasio, for the first, and perhaps the last time, made the text of the opera the receptacle of true poetry ; Goldoni composed a series of comedies, which, whatever may be their shortcomings, are vigorous portraits of contemporary society and manners ; and Alfieri, with greater defects in the execution of his works than either of his predecessors, and with less buoyancy and fertility of genius than any other poet who has ever achieved celebrity, became almost great by the mere intensity of passion, and by concentrating his thoughts on those political objects which began in his time to engross universal attention.

In that attempt to make operas poetical, in which Apostolo Zeno had just failed, Metastasio's tenderness, his sense of beauty, and his exquisite ear for melody, qualified him eminently to succeed. His best works are in the hands of every one who has any knowledge of the language ; and to those who have not, it would be impossible to describe the delightful though effeminate charm which dwells in the skilfully irregular recitative of his dialogue, and in the music of those songs which invariably close his scenes. The world which he has

* Vision on the death of the Princess Henrietta of France.

imagined, is indeed utterly unreal; but round his angelically virtuous kings and shepherdesses, his darkly shadowed villains, his imaginary combats of passion with duty, in the Roman palace or the Grecian meadow, there is diffused a feminine pathos, which makes us almost regret that his endowments could have been applied to no better purpose.

The regular drama was first successful in the north of Italy; but its oldest votaries, Martello, Conti, and Chiari, are now alike forgotten; and the only work from the early part of the century which still preserves its reputation, is the Merope of the antiquary Maffei, which tells its tragic tale with force and simplicity, heightened by some extremely dramatic touches of pathos.

The comic theatre attained fame in Venice, under the guidance of Goldoni, whose wandering life, amusingly related by himself, makes the great number of his comedies surprising, while it furnishes an excuse for many of their faults. He was deficient both in imagination and feeling, and nothing can be colder than many of his plays; but they represent life and society in their minutest features, and often with infinite slyness of humour. Indeed, much of the unpleasant impression which his writings leave in the mind of a foreigner, must be attributed, not to the author, but to the manners which he truly represents;—the marriages of convenience, so broadly exhibited, which rob the love-stories of their interest;—the *cicisbeism*, which is treated with a cautious hand, but still is disgusting;—and that want of self-respect which deforms so many of his characters, just as it has degraded so many of his countrymen in real life. The Italians, by whom these peculiarities pass unheeded, still recognise in Goldoni with delight the truest painter of their private life. In many of his comedies he introduces a few of the old masks from the Commedia dell' Arte; but it was a favourite aim with him to destroy that unclassical form of the drama.

Incited by his opposition, his fellow-citizen, Count Carlò Gozzi, came forward, about 1761, in defence of

the old extemporaneous comedies, for whose chief company of actors he composed new skeletons of plays. In these whimsical productions, he made the wildest fairy-tales the groundwork of his plots, captivated the spectators by gaudy scenery and magical transformations, and let loose his knot of Venetian masks to gambol in oriental gardens, amidst sultans and janissaries, sorcerers and fairies. Another attraction of his earlier pieces was contained in his merciless ridicule, showered on the writers of the regular drama. In his most lively work, "The Three Oranges," the hero of which, Tartaglia, is the son of the King of Diamonds, Chiari is introduced as a capricious princess Clarice, and again as the fairy Morgana, against whom is pitted Goldoni as the enchanter Clelio. The prince's hypochondriacal stupidity, the main incident of the piece, is maliciously represented as having been brought on by repeated doses of Chiari and Goldoni's Alexandrine verses, which are parodied in burlesque charms and prophecies.

Gozzi's whimsicalities of course found no imitators, and the improvised drama scarcely survived his day. Goldoni's prosaic imitation of life had a more permanent effect; and in his school the best pupil was the Marquis Albergati-Capacelli of Bologna. His "Prisoner," published in 1773, is inferior in reputation to his vigorous comedy of "The Prudent Friend;" though neither of them possesses so much real merit as his pieces approaching to broad farce. Among these, his satirical fling at the weaker sex, called "Hysterics," is an especial favourite among the reading Italians; and there is great contrivance as well as humour in "The Apple," "The Night," and "Love Feigned and True." Besides this writer, the critics scarcely deign to name any comic dramatists of the same period except two who were also actors, the Venetian Avelloni, and the Piedmontese Federici,—the latter of whom attained high popularity in the sentimental comedy. His "Duke of Burgundy" is an overcharged caricature of life, bustling and interesting in incident, and singularly powerful in stage-effect.

Alfieri, the eldest son of a noble family, has told us, with great frankness, the story of his early days. We behold him struggling through life against the evils flowing from a neglected education, which left him without even a language; for he spoke only French and the Piedmontese dialect, and learned pure Italian in manhood. We behold him suffering yet more severely from the rebellion of a fiery heart which he was never taught to tame. His curious autobiography relates also how he wandered through Europe, seeking rest and finding none,—how he threw himself upon literature in despair, and how a realm of grandeur there unveiled itself, of which (and this was not to him its meanest recommendation) he himself was the creator. His long attachment to the Countess of Albany, the widow of Charles Edward Stuart, forms one of those later chapters in his life, which exercised but little influence over the writings upon which his fame is based. In all these he is the proud recluse, who was happy while he erected imaginary republics in his closet, but, on walking out into the world, drew back with scorn from the slightest plebeian intrusion;—the stern politician, who was blind even to the real defects of the vicious governments he justly abhorred, and whose ideal of the state was something understood by himself alone;—the patriot, whose warmth was more that of the temper than of the heart;—the poet, whose inspiration was self-worship.

This, indeed, is the defect which, more than any other, deforms Alfieri's poetry. In his view of the constitution of the world, man is the divinity of it, and bends to no being higher than himself. The words of adoration may be there, but the sentiment is wanting; his personages make their destiny for themselves; and the pride of human strength overcomes that emotion of religious awe, upon which rests the whole fabric of the highest poetry.

The fierce abruptness of style, so unlike any thing previously known in Italian composition, which marked

his first four plays,* was considerably softened in those which, though composed before his first publication, were revised and given to the world later. The second series consisted of six tragedies,† and the third contained nine.‡ His tragic plays thus amounted in all to nineteen ; to which there are added in the collection of his posthumous works (besides translations) an original tragedy on the beautiful story of Alcestis, and the Abel, a piece which, uniting the tragedy with the opera, is called by its author a *tramelogedia*. His six comedies, which like his prose writings are little read, are vigorous but unpleasing illustrations of his political theories.

Alfieri's style always remained abrupt, concise, and exaggerated in emphasis ; and his narrow view as to the range of the drama forced him into a systematic baldness, to which the few oriental images in the Saul, and similar snatches in some others of his later works, form the only exceptions. Although his professed model was the antique, his classics were Seneca's tragedies, and his acquaintance with the Greek dramatists took place in advanced life. He strictly observes the unities, limits his characters to the least practicable number, banishes asides and confidants, and brings his catastrophe on the stage whenever it is possible. He not only despises the verisimilitude which other poets produce by depicting national features and local peculiarities, but casts all his characters in one mould, whose prototype is to be found in his own stern and unsocial temper. In despite of all these disagreeable peculiarities, an astonishingly vivid impression is left on the imagination by his pictures, of freemen resisting tyrants, as Timoleon and Raimondo de' Pazzi resist Timophanes and the Medici ; —of suspicious cruelty overwhelming open-hearted innocence, like Philip II. with Carlos and Isabella ;—or of the blaze of greatness and valour, like Saul's, setting

* Filippo, Polinice, Antigone, Virginia ; published in 1783.

† Agamennone, Oreste, Timoleone, Rosmunda, Octavia, Merope.

‡ Saul, Agide, Sofonisba, Mirra, Bruto Primo, Bruto Secondo, La Congiura de' Pazzi, Don Garzia, Maria Stuarda.

in the midst of storms. It would not be easy to name a character in which he produces an illusion of reality, except the Philip, whose terrible taciturnity is almost sublime; yet insulated scenes are often wonderfully strong, and Alfieri was not mistaken when he relied on having produced some pieces, in which the whole leaves an effect that cannot well be accounted for by the parts taken separately.

But as yet we have omitted altogether that which is in some respects the most interesting of all departments in the intellectual pursuits of the Italians. That tendency to speculation in political science, which gives so peculiar a colouring to many of their national histories, had never been extinct during their three centuries of modern servitude. It had slumbered during days of bloodshed, and cautiously shown itself from time to time under the protection of the government-censorships. In Venice, indeed, inquiries of this class were seldom checked when they did not attack the fabric of aristocracy; and, if they embraced an exposure of the evils attending ecclesiastical usurpation, they stood a fair chance of being not only tolerated, but rewarded. The resistance of the Neapolitan kings to the papal claim of paramount sovereignty, produced in their provinces a similar license; and there were many intervals during which freedom of publication was fostered by other princes, through indolence, caprice, personal interest, or generous feeling.

Machiavelli's questionable exposition of principles in politics, had been followed by the well-known work of the Piedmontese Jesuit Botero; Paruta, the historian of Venice, had produced a treatise not dissimilar in subject to Montesquieu's; and both that age and the succeeding gave birth to very many tracts, which either discussed the general theory of government, or applied it with due caution to particular systems of Italian polity. But till we reach the end of the seventeenth century, it is unnecessary to do more than indicate the rise of that

branch of political philosophy which investigates the causes that affect the wealth of nations.

In the year 1579, the universal confusion of the currency in the Cisalpine states had given rise to a dissertation on Money, by Scaruffi of Reggio; and a continuance of the same cause prompted, in a later period, several other essays on the subject. The Italian, however, for whom his countrymen claim the honour of having been the first to enunciate some of the leading principles in political economy, was Antonio Serra, whose treatise "On the Causes which may make Kingdoms abound with Gold and Silver," was dated from the prison of the Vicaria at Naples, in the year 1613.*

During the eighteenth century, there existed in Italy a school of political speculators, such as all Europe besides could with difficulty have matched, either for skill in writing or for strength of argument. The capricious patronage of Joseph aided these intrepid thinkers a little; the cordial liberality of Leopold and Tanucci was a far more efficient auxiliary.

We must overlook, in the mean time, the views of those men as to political institutions in general, in regard to which, though usually wise as well as bold, they propounded several theories tending dangerously towards democracy. In other respects their writings have several peculiarities which strike the English student as remarkable. In all of them, the point of view is that distant one, from which a people neither free nor prosperous regard every principle,

* The principal writings of the Italian Political Economists were collected under the auspices of Napoleon's consular government, and published in 1803-5, being exceedingly well edited by Baron Custodi. The collection makes forty-eight volumes in octavo, besides two supplementary volumes. The leading doctrines of the writers are ably analyzed, and their merits in comparison with foreign philosophers, especially English, weighed with creditable impartiality, in Count Pecchio's Storia della Economia Pubblica in Italia (2d edition, Lugano, 1832). Neither Custodi's collection, nor Pecchio's abstract, embraces any treatises except those that handle Political Economy properly so called; and consequently they have nothing of Vico or Pagano, very little of Filangieri, and but part of Beccaria.

whether constitutional or administrative. Innumerable propositions both of public right and of economical interest, which among us are assumed as self-evident postulates, are here proved by long deductions, which often begin with the very first axioms in the laws of society or of human thought. The broad basis which is thus laid, while it introduces much vagueness into their works on general politics, is even more actively injurious to their inquiries into political economy, where we find problems in the law of nations, or even in ethical science, continually mixed up with those questions of finance which are the proper province of such speculations. In the writings of this last kind, the nature of the special inquiries is another of the distinctions which characterize those foreign philosophers. Attaching themselves, very wisely, to topics in which their country was chiefly interested at the time, they have bequeathed to us, besides more extensive works, a library of treatises upon two sections of the science,—the nature of Money, and the policy of the Trade in Corn.

It is impossible even to name all the authors who have trodden this wide field in one or more of its divisions. Especial notice is deserved by the essays of the Neapolitan Broggia on Taxation and on Money; and by that cautious advocacy of free trade which was undertaken by the Sienese archdeacon Bandini. The latter is maintained by his countrymen to have anticipated the doctrines of the French economists: while they insist that the theory of population taught by Malthus had been laid down in the inconsistent and paradoxical writings of the Venetian monk Ortes. The works of Neri, Carli, Pagnini, Vasco, D'Arco, Briganti, Ricci, Paoletti, and others, are now principally valuable as storehouses of statistical observations.

But the greatest names are still to be noticed; and, mixing up, as in speaking of Italy we unavoidably must, the cultivators of political philosophy in all its branches, we discover seven men at least deservedly illustrious,

They are the following:—The Neapolitan professor, Giambattista Vico (1670—1744); Antonio Genovesi of Salerno (1712—1769); Count Pietro Verri, a Milanese (1725—1797); the Abate Ferdinando Galiani of Naples (1728—1787); the Marquis Cesare Beccaria of Milan (1735—1793); Francesco Mario Pagano, a Neapolitan lawyer from the Basilicata (1748—1799); and the Cavaliere Gaetano Filangieri, a native of Naples (1752—1788).

Vico and Pagano take place together, as master and scholar; and they stand apart from all the others, because, unlike these, they applied their theories exclusively to the historical illustration of the past. The name of the former, always regarded in his own country with a mixture of admiration and indulgence, has lately commanded from foreign scholars singular respect; a result owing partly to the harmony of his system at large with views at present popular, and partly to the coincidence of certain special theories of his with the conclusions stated by the great German historian of Rome. For both reasons, Pagano deserves no inconsiderable share in the reputation enjoyed by his teacher.

Vico's principal treatise, which he entitled "Principles of a New Science, founded upon the Common Nature of Nations,"* is perhaps without any exception the strangest composition that ever was written. The leading truth which he aims at bringing into full light, both here and in his other works, is simply this: that the revolutions of the world are all guided by the systematic interposition of Divine Providence. From this proposition he deduces a second,—that in all nations political changes follow, with but accidental exceptions, one unvarying course; after which, borrowing, perhaps unconsciously, a good deal from Machiavelli as well as from others, but carrying out the principles farther than any one, he divides the history of every people into three successive stages. The first is the age of the gods, in which language is hieroglyphical or symbolic, and government, through all its changes, essentially

* Principj di Scienza Nuova, d'intorno alla Commune Natura delle Nazioni.

theocratical; the second, the age of heroes, necessarily generated from the corruption of those elements that had ruled the preceding era, presents a language which is poetical, and a polity which, under whatever disguise it may appear, is always really aristocratic; and the third age, that of men, for the first time evolves the theory of equal rights, along with that of philosophical language, but, commencing with democracy, invariably finds its consummation in monarchy, the latest and most perfect shape of government. In the exposition of this theory, every precept of rhetoric, and most rules of common sense, are alike set at defiance; pertinent historical facts are used indiscriminately with the wildest mythological hypotheses; philological arguments, on which the writer places great reliance, are now stated with the caution of a philosopher, and now with the headstrong rashness of a harebrained pedagogue; and the most profound reflections upon human character and society are mingled with observations which, sometimes merely the fruit of recluse ignorance, wear in other cases the aspect of downright raving. Vico was a man of consummate genius, whom physical accident and years of solitary thinking had concurred in making more than half mad; and few things in literary history are more deeply to be regretted than that untoward lot, which rendered useless both to himself and others his wonderful powers of philosophical analysis and generalization.

The unfortunate Pagano, Filangieri's cherished friend, of whose tragical end we shall be witnesses on next resuming the thread of historical narrative, possessed a mind of a different temper, standing as far below his great teacher in grasp and acuteness, as he stood above him in his talent for communicating his opinions. Any one who might desire to become acquainted with Vico's system, without being perplexed or repelled by the manner in which he himself delivers it, would find his purpose pleasingly served by the study of Pagano's work on the Philosophy of History.* Assuming most of his master's

* De' Saggi Politici del Civile Corso delle Nazioni; ossia, De'

theories, he, however, finds it necessary to state them anew; and, setting out from these, he adopts as his leading point of view, the necessary evanescence of all forms of human society. With no great originality in general principles, he is often ingenious, sometimes singularly felicitous, in striking out insulated views; the mass of knowledge which he rears up as a support for his theories, is exceedingly apposite and varied; and although there is often something that is overcharged, and not a little that is diffuse, yet for the power of picturesque description and vivid narration, very few writers of history can be compared to him. The warmth of feeling, and the enlarged philanthropy of the book, affect us even painfully when we recollect the fate of the author. "He made," says the historian of his times, "no sign of fear, no sign of hatred: he died as he had lived, placid, innocent, and pure. It will be impossible to say of our age any thing worse than this, that Mario Pagano perished upon a gibbet."

All the writers who yet remain to be spoken of, and especially the two greatest among them, are connected by various ties with such inquiries as those of Vico and his expositor; but it is to their views on political economy that attention must here be chiefly invited. Even in regard to this subject, however, less importance can be attached either to their merit as writers, or to their originality as thinkers, than to the light which their works throw upon the state of opinion prevalent among enlightened minds in their country at the time. The historical student will now take more interest in knowing what the Italians then thought of corn-laws, free trade, or the constitution of the clerical body, than what Genovesi's real merits may have been in analyzing the sources of wealth, Verri's in indicating the functions of labour, or Filangieri's in helping to expose

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Principj, Progressi, e Decadenza delle Società, tom. i. 1783, tom. ii. 1785. The original however is hardly to be procured; and the present writer's acquaintance with the work is derived entirely from a German translation published in 1801.

the errors involved equally in the Mercantile System and in that of Quesnay.

Genovesi, persecuted by the court of Rome for his metaphysics and theology, was placed, in the year 1755, at Naples, in the first separate professorship of Political Economy that had been instituted in Europe. The neglect now experienced by his writings, the principal of which are his Lectures on the science he taught, is attributable to nothing so much as to the soundness and liberality of his opinions, which in some particulars anticipated modern discoveries, but have been in all cases excelled by later works in depth of analysis as well as in usefulness of illustration. Clear, manly, and business-like, with no pretensions to eloquence, his works will now tempt none but the student who wishes to make himself master of the history of this science. It was an inconsistency, though a natural one, in a writer who thought so accurately as he did regarding the sources of wealth, to attach himself to the Mercantile System, with its array of restrictions on foreign commerce; but his exposure of the unsoundness of the distinction, held even by Adam Smith, between different classes of labour as respectively productive or unproductive, does infinite credit to his acuteness. Not less honourable to his enlightenment of views, are his advocacy of the repeal of prohibitions on the trade in grain, and his arguments for the abolition of the usury-laws, of clerical celibacy, and of perpetual devises of land in favour of religious corporations.

Galiani's earliest work, an essay on Money, for which he was said to have received the materials from more experienced thinkers, exhibits remarkable strength of deduction, and some speculations on Value that have not yet lost all their importance. But the versatile and accomplished Abbé is best known through his French Dialogues on the Corn-Trade, written while he was secretary of legation at Paris. They prove, what would otherwise be incredible, that a lively book may be composed upon the most difficult question embraced in political economy. The bantering ironical strain of Count

Hamilton is the model; and the conversations in which the Italian Chevalier is made to confute all the reasons adduced for free trade by the French Marquis and President, are not perhaps so amusing as Grammont, but greatly more so than the adventures of Fleur d'Epine or the Four Faccardins. It would, however, be too much to expect a union of all qualities in a single mind; and accordingly there is less merit in the arguments by which the witty Neapolitan supports his proposition, that different states require different and even opposite systems in relation to the commerce in grain.

Among the numerous works of Verri, some are local or historical, like his invaluable Memoirs on the Administration of the State of Milan. Another dissertation, "On the Policy of Restrictive Laws, with especial reference to the Trade in Corn," is a lucid and temperate argument in favour of free trade in grain as the only system suitable for Austrian Lombardy. But the former of these pieces, though written in 1768, lay in manuscript till 1804; and the latter, composed in 1769, was published only in 1796. The author's fame during his lifetime rested on what is still his most valuable composition,—the Meditations on Political Economy,—the acuteness and originality of which have been acknowledged more cheerfully than usual by the writers of other nations. Perhaps, indeed, as an overthrower of popular errors, no political economist of the century, except Smith alone, was either so bold or so successful.

During the thirty years that preceded the Revolution, one of the most celebrated of all names was that of Beccaria, whose essay "On Crimes and Punishments," speedily translated into every language of Europe, had an influence on public opinion not easily conceivable by those who, living in a later age, think the truths demonstrated in the little book unquestionable and trite. The concisely sententious, yet imaginative style of this early composition, was tranfused with tenfold vigour into the author's Lectures on Political Economy, which, delivered in the years after 1768 from a chair then instituted for him at Milan, were never printed till they adorned

Custodi's collection in 1804. In plan and form, the lectures deserve to rank among the best of all philosophical works;—systematic in their arrangement even to excess; pointed and energetic in diction, though not unfrequently obscure through brevity; and studded with original expressions and images, which fix ideas in the memory by a single stroke. The most successful disquisitions are those on the division of labour, on the circumstances that determine its price, and on the nature of productive capitals; in all of which Beccaria came very near, in the abstract, to the theories of Smith.

Filangieri's short life, from early manhood till his death at the age of thirty-six, was devoted to the preparation of his great work on the Science of Legislation. In the influence which this distinguished man exerted upon opinion in his own country, he was second to no one of his time; but, neither as a writer nor as a thinker, can he be placed on the same high level with Beccaria. Many speculations which he thought it necessary to develop at great length, are little better than repetitions of what had been said nearly as well before; and much else upon which he sets a high value had been overlooked because it was self-evident, rather than from its being doubtful or unknown. His style, likewise, while his countrymen pronounce it to be as incorrect in idiom as that of Beccaria, is not only inartificially complex, but verbose to the very brink of tediousness; and the images which he paints by laborious and repeated touches, are generally less vivid than those which the Milanese philosopher dashes off without an effort. Still Filangieri's book has merits such as are shared by very few philosophical compositions, merits, too, which especially qualified it for serving as an appeal to the sluggish and blunted feelings of his countrymen. Throughout the whole, if first principles are seldom discovered, important inferences are often deduced with remarkable force of reasoning; facts, particularly such as were derived from contemporary history, and from the local administration and statistics of Italy, are brought forward with a fulness of detail exceedingly

unusual among the political thinkers of the south; and that fearless and self-confident ardour,—which sometimes, as in his mythological hypotheses, led him beyond his proper sphere, and sometimes, as in his strange discussions on the British constitution, concealed from him his own utter ignorance of facts,—yet carried him on with equal impetuosity in his headlong assault upon abuses consecrated by time, and defended by a combination of all the most powerful classes in society. The spirit of patriotic, intrepid, philanthropic generosity, which glows through every sentence he utters, imparts an eloquence atoning for a thousand faults.

According to the plan which Filangieri had laid down for himself, his work was to consist of Seven Books. The first was to treat of the general principles of legislative science; the second, of the laws which should regulate political economy; the third, of criminal jurisprudence; the fourth, of education, national character, and public instruction; the fifth, of laws regarding religion; the sixth, of the principles of property; and the seventh, of rules for the paternal authority and the good order of families. The execution of this design was arrested by death, in the middle of the fifth book.

CHAPTER IV.

Italian Art in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

PAINTING:—THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—*The School of Bologna*—Its Principles—The Three Caracci—Their Works—Lanfranco and Albano—Domenichino's Genius—Guido Reni—Guercino—Other Bolognese—*Painting in Rome*—Landscapes of Nicholas Poussin—Gaspar Poussin—Landscapes of Claude Lorraine—Salvator Rosa—Historical Pieces of Nicholas Poussin—Minor Artists—*Other Italian Schools*—Florence—Spagnoletto and Luca Giordano in Naples—Venice—Genoa—Lombardy—The Procaccini—THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—Its Feeble Character—Venetians—Canaletto — Bologna—Florence—Solimene in Naples—Mengs and Batoni in Rome—SCULPTURE:—Works of Bernini—Algardi—Il Fiammingo—Minor Artists of the Seicento—The Eighteenth Century—ARCHITECTURE:—THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—Impure Taste—Bad Churches — Good Palaces — Ponzio — The Family from Como — Bernini's Genius and Works—Venice—Guarini at Turin—THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY — Mixed Taste — Ivara at Turin — Vanvitelli at Naples—His Palace of Caserta.

PAINTING.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

TITIAN, as we have seen, was the last survivor of the great painters in the *cinquecento*, as the Italians call the sixteenth century: indeed he lived almost long enough to see art perish around him. But the wintry season of decay which darkened yet more heavily after his death, was followed by a reviving spring. The seventeenth century, although it was not ennobled by inventors who could compete with the greatness of the preceding age, was yet honourably fruitful in genius and energy. It was distinguished by two events in art: the establishment

of the historical school of the Caracci at Bologna, whose excellence lasted beyond the middle of the century; and the foundation of landscape-painting in Rome, under masters whose era extends a little farther down.

The Caracci and their Pupils.

The kinsmen who founded the new Bolognese school, were three: Lodovico Caracci (1555—1619); Annibale (1560—1609); and Agostino (1568—1602).*

The honour of planning the career of all the three belongs to Lodovico, who, despised for slowness in his youth by the Vasaris of his day, patiently improved himself by the study of nature, and by travels to Venice, Florence, and Parma. Resolving to combat the prevailing mannerism, he enlisted for this end his young cousins Annibale and Agostino, the latter of whom had been bred as a goldsmith, the former as a tailor. These two youths, scarcely less remarkably endowed than their more inventive kinsman, were yet unlike both to him and to each other. Annibale, rude and illiterate, became a bold and rapid artist, who has left an infinity of works possessing very unequal merit; Agostino, attached to letters, was timid and irresolute, more partial to engraving than to painting, and executed but few pictures, most of which are exquisite. But, from first to last, Lodovico was the guide and prompter of his cousins; and his works belong to a higher order than those left by either of them.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the three established at Bologna a regular academy of painting, which, in spite of vindictive opposition, soon commanded public respect, and was made illustrious by numerous men of genius. By the new masters the most skilful means were used for promoting the love of art; but their great principle (a principle more specious than solid, which owed its success under the Caracci to the talents of them and their pupils, not to its own genuine merits) was the attempt to unite in the same artist, and even in the same piece, the excellencies characterizing

* Consult Baldinucci, Notizie de' Professori del Disegno; Opere, Milano, 1808-1812, tom. ix. p. 186-286.

all the different schools of painting. The scientific knowledge of Florence, and the skilful colouring of Venice, were to go hand in hand with the dramatic power and purity of Raffaelle, and the chiaroscuro and hovering grace of Correggio. Invention was greatly endangered by maxims such as these; but the wise teachers also inculcated continually the lesson, that all rules were subservient to the one important purpose, of making art the interpreter and imitator of nature. The intellect of their pupils comprehended this truth; and a few of the greater artists in the Bolognese school are strongly original.

The paintings of the Caracci themselves are to be found in all the chief galleries of Europe. Lodovico's greatest work, executed with the aid of his pupils, is the series of frescoes in the deserted monastery of San Michele in Bosco, on a hill close to the walls of Bologna, representing scenes from the histories of Saint Benedict and Saint Cecilia. Obliterated in many places by neglect and natural decay, this collection is still one of the most interesting productions of art. Some of Lodovico's best easel-pictures are perfect models in a solemn tone of colouring, which is not only peculiarly his own, but is worthily supported by his graceful drawing, as well as by his dignified and strong expression. These are chiefly in Bologna.* Annibale's most extensive achievement was the celebrated Gallery of the Farnese Palace in Rome, where he depicted skilfully, but coldly, in fresco, a wilderness of mythological subjects. Agostino's best picture is his famous Communion of Saint Jerome, the prototype of Domenichino's, representing the same subject.† The dying saint has just been brought from his

* Pinacoteca, No. 42-54.—No. 43, the Transfiguration; No. 44, the Calling of Saint Matthew; No. 45, the Birth of Saint John the Baptist, are particularly recommended to the student by Reynolds. No. 46, the Preaching of the Baptist in the Desert, is considered by Fuseli as the artist's masterpiece in solemn, expressive, poetical colouring; and the same writer gives nearly an equally high rank, for colouring in a strong and sublime style, to No. 49, the Flagellation of the Saviour.

† In the Gallery of the Bolognese Academy, No. 34.

cell, into a portico opening upon an eastern landscape; and priests are about to administer the sacrament to the expiring man. Several of the figures are very expressive; and the composition and tone of the whole are admirable.

Some pupils of the Caracci have painted more attractively, if not really better, than their masters. Five of them claim especial notice:—Guido Reni (1575—1642); Francesco Albano (1578—1660); Giovanni Lanfranco (1581—1647; Domenico Zampieri, usually named Domenichino (1581—1641); and Gianfrancesco Barbieri, called Il Guercino da Cento (1590—1666), who, though he did not study under the Bolognese teachers, owed deep obligations to their works.

Lanfranco possessed less originality and feeling than any of the others; but his frescoes, painted with great vigour and freedom, are common in cupolas and chapels, both at Rome and Naples. Albano, though a man of much invention and poetical sentiment, cannot rank with Guido, Domenichino, and Guercino; yet his pictures, of which originals or school-copies are far from being uncommon, are extremely pleasing, both in design and treatment. His favourite subjects are mythological: nymphs and loves repose among woods and fountains, or sport beside gleaming rivers; and his Venuses and Europas, his Cupids and Genii, bright and rosy forms, stand out with delightful prominence from landscapes whose cool deep hues resemble those of Domenichino.

Domenichino, the son of a poor man in Bologna, after overcoming formidable obstacles, and fleeing from the cruelty of his jealous master, the foreigner Calvart, entered the academy of the Caracci, whose instructions he purchased by the performance of menial services. His whole history was equally luckless with its beginning. His slowness and timidity prevented the public from duly appreciating his genius: his fellow-artists, with Lanfranco at their head, envied the talents which they had discernment enough to perceive, and persecuted him with a malice which the kindness of his masters, and

the generous friendship of Albano, were not always able to defeat; and the retired and studious life of this great painter was terminated by chagrin, or perhaps by poison. His style, especially in his oil-paintings, wants ease and freedom: and his composition, and the choice of his subjects (which he repeatedly took from works already celebrated), equally evince a deficiency in invention; but his science was remarkable, his colouring simple and chaste, yet at the same time deep; and his expression, though little varied, is most singularly vivid and characteristic. His favourite idea of countenances is that of beautiful and unripe youth, represented with small delicate features, through which gleams a feeling of almost infantine innocence. Beyond this tone of sentiment he seldom rises, and, in his larger compositions, many of the figures sink below it; for his groups very often have their solemnity interrupted by the intrusion of the most familiar scenes and actions.

His genuine oil-pictures are not common out of his own country. The subjects are chiefly sacred, but not unfrequently mythological, or taken from the Italian poets; and his landscapes, embracing extensive scenery, painted in his own peculiarly deep and cool style, with few or no figures, are highly prized. Most of his easel-pictures belong to a period in the middle stage of his life, during which, after his studies in Bologna and Lombardy, he was pensioned at Rome. In this time was produced his most celebrated piece, the Communion of Saint Jerome, in which his felicity of expression even surpasses that of Agostino's picture, while the arrangement of the details deviates from the model with some degree of originality.* A little later, Domenichino painted in Bologna two famous pictures, his Madonna of the Rosary, and the Martyrdom of Saint Agnes.† The former, representing the mysteries of prayer, is a composition obscurely emblematic, though in some parts finely and sweetly expressive. In the

* In the Gallery of the Vatican; copied in Mosaic in S. Peters.
† In the Accademia in Bologna, Nos. 207 and 206.

latter, several of the subordinate groups, beautiful though they be, are yet so familiar as to derogate from the spirit of the scene; but the figure of the virgin martyr is indescribably lovely, while its expression is almost equal to the absorbed ecstasy of the Saint Jerome. Returning to Rome, besides other works, he painted his splendid Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian.*

Domenichino's frescoes indicate not only a higher sense of art than his oil-paintings, but a greater technical mastery. One of the earliest of them was the Scourging of St Andrew, in a chapel adjoining the church of San Gregorio on the Cælian Mount, painted in competition with Guido's Procession of St Andrew to martyrdom, in the same place. He afterwards went to Grotta Ferrata, a few miles from Rome, and, on the walls of a chapel in the Greek Monastery there, executed a succession of scenes from the lives of the Saints Nilus and Bartholomew. Soon after the Saint Jerome, he painted the Life of Saint Cecilia, on the walls of her chapel, in the French church of S. Louis in Rome; and then, in a chapel of the cathedral at Fano, the admirable Life of the Virgin, in fifteen compartments. During his second residence in Rome, his frescoes were very numerous. The most famous are, the colossal Evangelists, in the corbels of the cupola of Sant' Andrea della Valle, and the Life of Saint Andrew, in the tribune of the same church. The envy of Lanfranco was successful in preventing Domenichino from completing the cupola of that building; and similar vexations made him leave unfinished the last of those fine figures of the Cardinal Virtues, which decorate the angles of the cupola in San Carlo a' Catinari. Disheartened and impoverished, he was tempted to accept from the viceroy of Naples a commission for the frescoes of the Tesoro or chapel of St Januarius, in the cathedral of that city. This unlucky visit to the south was rendered miserable to him, as similar visits were to other great artists, by the jealousy of the native painters; and only

* In the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome; copied in Mosaic in S. Peters.

a few figures on the walls of the Tesoro exist to remind us of his labours there.*

Guido's fate was very different. He enjoyed an uninterrupted popularity, which the efforts of the Caracci, in opposing to him Domenichino at Rome and Guercino at Bologna, were unable to counteract. His history has no marked feature, except his attachment to gaming, which he sought to gratify, especially in his later years, by dashing off and selling those slovenly pieces which disgrace his name in so many collections. His guiding principle is grace, of which his youthful and female figures present exquisite examples; a grace, however, which, while it evidences the study of natural beauty, cannot conceal how very much it owes to art, or even to artifice. His forms, though not always accurate, are usually borrowed from the antique, the Niobe and the Mediccan Venus being his favourite models; the severe beauty of the former is unhesitatingly assigned to the penitent Magdalen, or to other characters with which it comports equally ill; and the ideal loveliness of the outline is never sacrificed to expression either in countenance or attitude. The graceful repose which thus characterizes his manner of design, is supported by his colouring in all its varieties. He began art as an imitator of the dark shades of Caravaggio; and the first of those styles which may be called his own, is strong, deep, and yet delicate, having that night-like gloom as the ruling tone. In most of his works, however, there reigns a broad lucid softness which deserts altogether his original model, but does not want the strength of his Bolognese masters, except in those careless pieces for which this style gave him such unfortunate facilities.

Guido's frescoes are not numerous. The most celebrated are, in Bologna, the Paradise of the Dominican church, and in Rome, the famous Aurora in a garden-house of the Rospigliosi Palace. Among his oil-paintings, some of the best specimens in his characteristic and more delicate manner are, the Saint Michael van-

* See Bellori, Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, ed Architetti, p. 171-224. (2d Edit.)

quishing Satan, in the Capuchin church of the Conception at Rome; and the Assumption, in the church of Saint Ambruogio at Genoa. In his bolder manner may be noticed the Crucifixion of Saint Peter, which has much of Caravaggio,* and the admirable Massacre of the Innocents, a simple composition, in which two ruffians terrify a group of females and children, one of whom, a mother in the foreground, seated beside her two dead infants, and with clasped hands looking up to heaven, is expressive beyond any thing else that the artist ever painted.† The Madonna della Pietà, and the Christ on the Cross, both in the strong manner, are scarcely inferior.‡

Guercino's studies, besides his intercourse with the best pupils of the Caracci, embraced, as theirs did, the Venetian school; and, like Guido, he attached himself to Caravaggio, whose manner indeed always continued strongly to influence him. His usual subjects were either poetical or sacred; but his powerful management of masses of light and shade, and his mingled harmony and vigorous relief, were his leading excellencies, constituting what has been aptly called the magic of his style. He is always strong rather than dignified; and effects of chiaroscuro supply the place of deep expression. In the spirit of his art, he does not nearly come up to Guido, and is unmeasurably beneath Domenichino, although, in the mechanism which sometimes not unskilfully apes its spirit, he is not inferior to the former, and far higher than the latter. Besides an early style of which there are few instances, Guercino had two manners,—the strong and characteristic one already described, and a weaker one into which he gradually fell in later life, imitating with little success the softness of Guido.

To his own style and its period belong his finest oil-paintings; of which the most noted is the Finding of the Body of Saint Petronilla, a large composition possessing an imposing grandeur in the masses of chiaroscuro,

* In the Gallery of the Vatican; copied in Mosaic in S. Peters.
† In the Gallery of the Bolognese Accademia, No. 135.
‡ Bolognese Accademia, Nos. 134 and 136.

and worthy of the Venetians in its draperies.* He is said to have painted a hundred and six altar-pieces, besides an infinity of pictures for other purposes. Perhaps his best frescoes are those in the cupola of the cathedral at Piacenza; but his most celebrated work of that kind is the Aurora of the Villa Ludovisi in Rome, an exquisite example of the effect which may be produced by a skilful management of light and shade, without elevation of forms or of essential expression.

The scholars and imitators of the Caracci, and of their five great pupils, kept possession of the school of Bologna till towards the close of the seventeenth century. One of the most vigorous among them was Alessandro Tiarini, especially attached to Lodovico. Giacomo Cavedone attained great reputation for original works; Andrea Sirani and his daughter were remarkable for being exact copyists of Guido; while the same office was performed for Guercino by a family of Gennari.

Painting in Rome.

Before the end of the sixteenth century the renown of its antiquities and art had made Italy what it has ever since continued to be, the place of pilgrimage and of study for the artists of all Europe. Rome was the favourite resort of those transient visiters, among whom were the greatest masters in Transalpine art; other foreigners, settling in the country, were soon regarded as natives; and this class, while it includes a few good names in historical painting, boasts of the very founders of the Italian school of landscape.

Landscape-painting, though it may be said to have owed its origin to Titian, had been driven to seek nourishment and protection beyond the Alps; but the lesson which Germany and the Low Countries had learned from Italy was speedily repaid. About the beginning of the seventeenth century Paul Brill of Antwerp, and his brother Matthew, painted in Rome; and there, in

* In the Gallery of the Capitol, No. 65; admirably copied in Mosaic in S. Peters.

1620, Adam Elzheimer of Frankfort died after a long residence. The Roman school of landscape, which was soon formed, produced many excellent artists, and four great masters, of whom, however, one only was purely Italian :—Nicholas Poussin, a Norman (1594—1665); Claude Gelée, called Claude Lorraine from his birthplace (1600—1682); Gaspar Poussin, a Roman of French extraction (1613—1675); and Salvator Rosa, a Neapolitan (1615—1673).

Nicholas Poussin spent in Italy the greater part of a long life; and landscape-painting in oils may be considered to have been by him brought almost to perfection.* His works yield to Claude's in colouring, and as characteristic representations of Italian scenery, while they are excelled by Gaspar Poussin's for animation and variety: but they were the earliest in their class, of those at least painted in Italy, which displayed minute observation of the features of inanimate nature; and their broad simplicity and classic grandeur are even finer than in the artist's historical pieces. His magnificent forest-thickets are adorned with antique buildings, and the figures which enliven the scene are usually subjects from classical history or mythology. His poetry, too, is often delightful, both in design and in allusions; as in the celebrated picture where shepherds and maidens gather round a tomb, and read its inscription: "I also lived in Arcadia."† The best of his pieces must now be sought in the Louvre.

When Nicholas was first in Rome, a needy and obscure man, he was kindly tended through a dangerous illness by the family of his host, one Dughet an emigrant Frenchman. He afterwards married this man's daughter, and educated his son Gaspar, who adopted the name of his brother-in-law, and possesses one of the very highest reputations among landscape-painters. His colouring, though sombre and sometimes monotonous, is generally full of nature; his touch is at once delicate and free; and in his composition the clustering

* See Felibien, Entretiens sur Les Vies des Peintres, tome ii. p. 309-442; ed. 1688.

† In the Louvre, No. 226.

Apennines, the retiring plains, and the elements of Italian architecture, are blended into a whole which is at once beautiful and romantic. His pictures of storms are particularly animated. Gaspar's pieces are scattered through all the cities of Europe, but Italy still possesses a good many; the best collection of his oil-paintings being that of the Doria gallery in Rome, while the best of his frescoes are those in the Roman church of San Martino a' Monti, with others in the Doria and Colonna palaces.

Claude, scarcely ever quitting the papal city or its vicinity, lived wholly for his art; and, from long excursions devoted to sketching in the Campagna or among the mountains, returned only to resume his labour at the easel, in his house on the Pincian Mount. With the exception of seaport views, which, however, he painted often and with great splendour, his compositions are always formed out of what he saw around the eternal city: the wide undulating flats, diversified by tufted hillocks or shady dells; the little volcanic lakes, and slow gleaming brooks; the aërial amphitheatre of distant mountains; and the antique temples and aqueducts, rising near us from the bosom of the woods or from the platform of the silent plain. But, besides this, the atmosphere (and this is Claude's peculiar beauty) is always that of Rome. The bright illumination of the foreground,—the gradual decline by which the clear light passes into the rosy dewiness of the horizon,—the effects of the cloudless sunrise or evening twilight;—these form the spirit which gives his landscapes such wonderful truth and loveliness, and leaves his pictures of Italian scenery, with frequent faults of taste and composition, still unapproached for harmony and nature. Many of his best pieces adorn various galleries in England;* some are in the Louvre; and a good many exist in collections elsewhere, Italy now possessing fewer than most other countries.

* Several are in the National Gallery, one of which, called the Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca, is a duplicate or copy of the celebrated "Mulino" of the Doria Palace in Rome.

Salvator, a wit and poet, prided himself more on his historical pictures than on his landscapes, although on the latter his modern reputation chiefly rests. He was a pupil of Spagnoletto at Naples, but in his twenty-first year removed to Rome, where, or at Florence, he spent the remainder of his life, in painting history-pieces, landscapes, and caricatures, and in composing verses, of which his Satires are the most famous. In his landscapes battle-scenes are not unfrequently introduced, and sea-port views are common; but his favourite subjects are gloomy mountainous dells, pierced with caves and over-hung by ancient shattered trees, amongst which appear shepherds and robbers. His scenery is a combination of the wildest of those features which are seen scattered amidst the Apennines. His execution is spirited, or even audacious, but without delicacy; his choice of materials is careless, and seldom happy; and there hangs over his groups a cloudy and tempestuous sky, through which sunshine has no strength to penetrate. His works are imposing, and occasionally even grand; but he must rank below Claude and both the Poussins.

Among the other landscape-painters who attained reputation in Rome during this century, the Dutch artists Jan Both and Herrmann Swanevelt might be numbered without impropriety. The ruffian Peter Molyn of Haarlem derived his name of Il Tempesta from the vigour with which he represented storms. In battle-painting Salvator was followed by Jacques Courtois, called Il Borgognone, and by Cerquozzi called Michel Angelo delle Battaglie, or delle Bamboccie. Landscapes were the best works of an excellent Comasque artist in this century, Pier Francesco Mola.

Passing to the historical painters in Rome, we find that the first place, among those who did not issue from the school of Bologna, belongs to Nicholas Poussin. In nature and grace his works of this class cannot compete with Guido's; in expression they seldom approach those of Domenichino; and in simplicity they are far excelled by those of all the Caracci. But in a placid and classic

grandeur, which breathes the very spirit of antiquity, Poussin outdoes all his contemporaries, perhaps all who either preceded or have followed him. His study of the antique, it is true, was common to him with all great artists from Michel Angelo downwards; still no one had so deeply penetrated it in all its details; and, what is more, none but he had nourished the desire of anew creating the old heathen world. The steady greatness of his style harmonized with the subjects and the costume; the attempt at rivalling Domenichino's depth of feeling was less successful, and produced either coldness or exaggeration; the invention was rich, and often most felicitous; the composition was pure, though balanced with a correctness which bordered on the theatrical; and the most obvious defect lay in the colouring.

England possesses Poussin's two celebrated sets of drawings, called the Seven Sacraments.* His famous Martyrdom of St Erasmus errs in the choice of its revolting subject.† In his excellencies not less than in his faults, he may be regarded as essentially the forerunner of the French school of David.

None of the native Italians who remain to be named as having painted historical pieces in Rome, bear to be put in competition with Poussin, far less with the Carracci and their great scholars. Andrea Sacchi, a creditable third-rate artist, still retains much celebrity in his own country. His negative merits were set in opposition to the dazzling style of Pietro Da Cortona, the leader of the Florentine school; and the contest was continued in the persons of their respective disciples. Pietro's best scholars in Rome were Romanelli and Ferri; while Sacchi's best pupil was Carlo Maratta, whose cold pictures, uniting an almost Raffaellesque purity of outline with a harmonious and extremely pleasing style of colour, were hailed as the revival of a better style in art. The list of Romans may be closed with Domenico Feti, and Giambattista Salvi, called Da Sassoferrato.

* The one series belongs to the Duke of Rutland; the other is in the Stafford Gallery.

† In the Gallery of the Vatican; copied in mosaic in S. Peters.

The other Schools of Italy.

In Florence the favourite painter of the century was Pietro Berrettini, called Da Cortona, an inexpressive mannerist, but an agreeable and showy one. Another in the same city was Francesco Furini, from whose hand some exquisite cabinet pictures are to be met with; and a still better was Carlo Dolce, an artist of greater reputation but not dissimilar genius.

In Naples the first names to be recorded are those of the three infamous persecutors of the Bolognese artists. Corenzio and Caracciolo owe their immortality chiefly to their hatred of their betters;* but Giuseppe Ribera, called Lo Spagnoletto from his Spanish birth, has higher merit (1593—1656). He was a scholar of Caravaggio, to whose broad dark manner he always adhered, applying it with great force and success to the representation of horrible subjects. Spagnoletto's genius may be most fairly estimated in Naples, which in this period possessed also Mattia Preti, called Il Cavaliere Calabrese, and Aniello Falcone, noted for his bloody share in the insurrection of Masaniello. The last remarkable artist of the time was Luca Giordano, nicknamed Luca Fa Presto, from his astonishing rapidity of hand. His style possesses more originality and show than real goodness; but his colouring, especially in his frescoes, is clear and brilliant, his figures have often an air of nobility, and his invention is wonderfully fruitful.

Venice was in the hands of mannerists and imitators, the earliest of whom was Jacopo Palma the younger. Varotari, called Il Padovanino, was essentially an imitator of Titian; Pietro Liberi may be considered an eclectic; and Turchi, named L' Orbetto, possessed more elegance than strength.

Genoa produced one good artist, namely Paggi, who was followed by Strozzi, called Il Prete Genovese, and he again by Castiglione.

In Lombardy, Modena furnished to Bologna, besides

* Dominici, Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, ed Architetti Napoletani, tom. i. p. 300; tom. iii. p. 7.

Cavedone, Bartolommeo Schidone, a painter of high excellence, especially as a colourist. Art in Milan was supported, in the early part of the century, by the Procaccini of Bologna. The father, Ercole, was an imitator of Correggio; the elder son, Camillo, modelled himself chiefly on Parmigianino; Giulio Cesare Procaccini, by far the best of the family, was a man of much genius, and his style displayed great liveliness and nature.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The eighteenth century was for painting in Italy an age of systematic, learned, uninspired industry. Academies were every where formed, many artists possessed much mechanical skill, and some showed great taste and science. In portraits and miniatures, there were several good painters; in landscape, two or three excellent ones; in historical painting, there arose none of real eminence.

The territory of Venice produced for a few years a greater number of tolerable historical painters than any other district, none of them, however, adhering to the principles of the older Venetians. The best were, Trevisani, Ricci, Tiepolo, and Rotari; while Rosalba Carriera, in the same quarter, was famous for miniatures. But no Italian works of the century are so interesting as the cabinet landscapes of Antonio Canal, called Il Canaletto (1697—1768). Representing real scenes in Venice, or composed of fragments from the picturesque canals and squares, they are delightful for their minute finish, their distinct and correct perspective, and the clear silvery brilliancy of their colouring. The most numerous collection of them is in Dresden.

The new academy of Turin, directed by Beaumont, attained a creditable character, and no more. Another academy was formed at Bologna in 1708, under the guidance of Carlo Cignani, the most vigorous Bolognese artist of the time; and the best scholar it produced was Franceschini. None of the Florentines need be named except the landscape-painter Zuccherelli, who, like his countryman Cipriani, laboured long in England. Naples

possessed, till the middle of the century, one of the most showy and rapid designers of modern times, Francesco Solimene, who executed a wonderful number of richly-coloured and well-invented pieces in fresco and oil, embracing every branch of the art, from historical painting to landscape and still-life. Sebastiano Conca left Naples for Rome, where he formed his style, chiefly remarkable for its strong and lucid colouring.

Among the Roman artists, we find the excellent landscape-painter Franz van Bloemen, a Dutchman, called L'Orizzonte from his beautiful distances. Besides him, two names only, both in the historical department, and belonging to the middle and latter part of the century, are eminent enough to be selected :—Anton Raphael Mengs, a Bohemian, and Pompeo Batoni of Lucca. These men, rivals during their whole lives, coincided in their classical views of art, setting down, as their great aim, dramatic expression and the purity of Raffaelle. Their success was imperfect; but Batoni was certainly the greater genius of the two, and many of his works have much grace and invention. Mengs was a man of scholarship, taste, and philosophy, whose indefatigable industry enabled him to rise higher than almost any other artist has ever risen, with a capacity naturally so confined. Few men have produced works so free from fault; but his judicious writings on art will outlive the memory of his paintings.

SCULPTURE.

During the seventeenth century, the highest names in this art were those of Giovanni Francesco Bernini, a Neapolitan (1589—1680); Alessandro Algardi, a Bolognese (1602—1654); and François du Quesnoi, a native of Brussels, called in Italy Il Fiammingo (1594—1646).

All the three worked chiefly for Rome. Bernini, a man of ready invention and quick execution, was the idol of his age, and extolled as the equal of the ancients; but his style was merely an exaggeration of the faults of Giovanni Bologna. Algardi and Fiammingo, neglected and poor, laboured less for fame than for bread. Although

neither of them belonged to Bologna's school, their common tendency was as erroneous as Bernini's; for both, especially Algardi, studied painting, and formed their sculpture on its rules.

Some of Bernini's early works have a purity and sobriety which contrast forcibly with the affectation of his later statuary. To this better class belong the Apollo and Daphne of the Villa Borghese; the Rape of Proserpine in the Villa Ludovisi; and the best of all, the youthful statue of Saint Bibiana, placed in a small chapel among the ruins and vineyards which cover the southern slope of the Esquiline. Of the extravagant and impure taste of his most admired figures, a glaring example is that which he himself called "the least bad" of his works,—the voluptuous Saint Teresa of the Roman church Della Vittoria. The affected, fluttering grace of the colossal Doctors, who support the saint's chair in the Tribune of S. Peters, is not less vicious in itself, nor less alien to the place and the subject.

Many of Algardi's sculptures were lost at the sack of Mantua; and S. Peters now contains his best work, and his worst. The latter is the monument of Leo the Eleventh with its clumsy and ill-draped female figures; the former is the bas-relief of Attila's Repulse, an immense composition of many figures, and including different distances. Arranged, like Ghiberti's gates, on the principles of painting, it is of course a failure in effect, notwithstanding the excellence of some particulars, such as the reproving pope, and the Hun's page, a child quite in the manner of Domenichino.

Fiammingo enjoyed few opportunities of honourable labour. He was especially celebrated for his figures of children, and with reason, though the forms are unduly corpulent, and in some instances even appear swollen. Examples are to be seen on tombs in the Roman church Dell' Anima, and the Neapolitan church of the Santi Apostoli. His Saint Susanna, which stands in the church of Our Lady of Loreto in Trajan's Forum, a gracefully draped figure, with a beautiful and gently drooping head, is one of the purest works of the age;

but in his only other statue, the colossal Saint Andrew, which fills one of the niches in the dome of S. Peters, the artist's desponding timidity has tempted him to imitate some of the very worst faults of Bernini.

It would be quite useless to name any other sculptors of the seventeenth century, were it not that the whole country, especially Rome, swarmed with them, and that their works stare us in the face at every turning. Of Bernini's imitators or scholars, Antonio Raggi, called Il Lombardo, was one of the best; while Bolgi and Mocchi give us two of the statues in the niches of the cupola of S. Peters.* Ruscone, a Milanese of much reputation, left several monuments and figures in Rome. The most fashionable sculptors in Tuscany were the family of Foggini, whose best-known work is the monument of Galileo in Santa Croce; but Pietro Tacca likewise enjoyed at Florence a reputation which forbids his name to be omitted.† Venice possessed Baldassare Lunghena; Genoa, the two Parodi; and in Naples was produced Corradini's Modesty, with its translucent veil, a mechanical curiosity still extant.

On the Italian sculptors of the eighteenth century, it would be cruel to say much. Penna, Angelini, Pacili, Bracci, Sibilla, and Pacetti, the artists whose works Canova found in possession of the public favour, are already forgotten, and may slumber in peace.

ARCHITECTURE.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

The edifices of this age bear as large a proportion to those of other periods, as do its sculptures: and the productions of the one art are not less faulty than those of the other.

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* Mocchi's statue is the Veronica, whose clothes fly out as if in a hurricane. Bernini, who had opened niches in the piers to receive the colossal statues, and was suspected of having thus injured their stability, asked Mocchi sneeringly whence came the wind which ruffled the saint's drapery? "From the cracks," answered the other, "which you have made in the cupola."

† Baldinucci, Opere, tom. x. p. 412-459. Rosini, La Monaca di Monza, cap. 7.

The same theatrical taste reigns in both. Palladio, like Raffaelle, to whom he has been compared by Milizia, was succeeded by a worse generation, for whom even his excellencies contained the seeds of error. The taste of the day applauded buildings which were erected with a view to picturesque, or rather to scenic show; contrasts of light and shade, and effects of linear perspective, were eagerly studied; and the complexity which prevailed in the general plan, was quite consonant to the unclassical ornament of the crowded details. The palaces, however, were not nearly so bad as the churches, which, with very few exceptions, are execrable; and the same architect sometimes built wretched ecclesiastical edifices, and palaces of high merit. The inspiration of religion seemed to have departed, leaving that of worldly pomp behind. Rome was the great seat of architecture in this age; and to it we may chiefly confine ourselves.

Of the inequality now mentioned we find examples in the works of an obscure Lombard named Flaminio Ponzio, who, in Rome, was the architect, not only of the Sacristy and Pauline Chapel of Santa Maria Maggiore, which are quite in the taste of the age, but also of the Palazzo Sciarra in the Corso, a simple, grand, broadly planned structure, worthy of the best times of art. The sculptor Algardi exhibited a similar difference of style, between his unsatisfactory façade of S. Ignatius, and his elegant mansion and garden of the Villa Panfili, on the Janiculum, one of the loveliest scenes about the city.

After such names as these, we may pass over the two families of the Lunghi and Rainaldi, who built so much in Rome. A third family, from the diocese of Como, refuses to be so summarily dismissed. In the preceding century, it had furnished Rome with Domenico Fontana, who introduced his kinsman Carlo Maderno; and now Maderno in his turn presented his cousin Francesco Borromini. Of the trio who thus transmitted papal favour like an inheritance, each successive member was worse than he who went before him. Maderno was the most extensively mischievous; because, unfortunately for his memory, he was allowed to lay his sacri-

legious hands upon S. Peters, whose lengthened nave, with the portico and façade (the latter of which is the most hopeless deformity in Rome), will hold up his name to reproach while the world endures. But, though Maderno's impure taste was unequal to ecclesiastical architecture in any shape, and though his mind sunk into utter stupidity when it attempted to deal with the conceptions of Bramante and Michel Angelo, yet he was not always a blockhead; for, like other men of his time, he could build palaces, if he could do nothing else. It is not easy to assign to him his true share in the palace of the Barberini, continued by Bernini, and finished by Borromini, which has on the whole a striking and majestic air; but the same character belongs to the sober and well arranged Mattei palace, which was wholly executed from the designs of Maderno. On Borromini's head rests the guilt of having modernized the nave of S. John Lateran, walling up the old columns in huge piers, piercing the piers with strange niches for statues, and transforming the whole interior into its present shapeless ugliness. Among his original designs in Rome, the Church of S. Agnes in the Piazza Navona, though extravagant and faulty, has redeeming features, and is not his worst. That unenviable distinction belongs to the little church of San Carlino at the Four Fountains, a building whose whole cubic contents are said not to equal one of the piers of S. Peters. On its puny front the outlines undulate like waves; and columns large and small, pedestals, entablatures, and balustrades, doors, windows, niches, pannels, and sculptures, jostle each other as if fighting for room.

The fame of Borromini was overshadowed by the activity and invention of Bernini, whose architecture, though founded distinctly on the ornate and theatrical taste of his sculpture, is less vicious, and in some instances much superior to any thing executed in his times. His most celebrated work is the magnificent colonnade of S. Peters, a rich and pleasing design, not indeed equalling the sublimity which the scene and the materials might have prompted, but far more than

worthy of the church externally, and almost worthy of its interior. Bernini's other architectural efforts in the same city are pretty numerous. Among his palaces, one façade of the Palazzo Barberini may be considered as the purest. The Palazzo Odescalchi-Bracciano violates several of the most peremptory rules of the art and some of the undeniable principles of beauty; and yet this building, with its plain basement, its lofty line of Corinthian pilasters, its rich, though capricious windows, and the massive balustrade which crowns all, has an impressiveness which it is difficult to resist. Bernini's example was as dangerous as any that could have been given; but if his contemporaries had been directed by genius like his, the Roman architecture of his age would not have been the thing it is.

It is enough to name two artists of other Italian states during this century. The architectural taste in Venice may be fairly estimated from the Salute, built by Lunghena, a large octagonal church, highly over-ornamented on the exterior, but tasteful and well-proportioned in the inside. Guarini, a Modenese, was a follower of Borromini in his love of crowded ornament, his hatred of straight lines, and his general extravagance. His chief field was Turin, in which, besides other buildings, he erected the Carignano Palace, the Church of San Lorenzo, and the celebrated Chapel of the Sudario, containing a very famous relic. This picturesquely gloomy shrine stands raised like a gallery behind the high altar of the Cathedral, separated from it by a screen, and incrusted with black marble.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

During this age all the fine arts in Italy were nearly on a level. The name of Vanvitelli, the best of its architects, is not a very high one; but yet his time (the middle of the period), and most of his works, are far above the level of the *seicentisti*, or artists of the seventeenth century.

Beginning, as before, at Rome, the first name we find is that of a new emigrant from Como, Carlo Fontana,

whose chief performance, the front of San Marcello on the Corso, is completely Borrominesque. The prevalence of the same taste till the middle of the century is shown by Gregorini's horribly deformed façade and portico of Santa Croce in Gierusalemme. To Galilei, a Florentine, belongs the principal front of S. John Lateran, which, though in an incorrect taste, is certainly striking, and infinitely superior to Maderno's exterior of S. Peters; and the artist was still more successful in the famous Corsini Chapel of the same church, where the profusion of precious ornaments is not more surprising than the grace and elegance of their arrangement. Fuga, also a Tuscan, did some harm to the interior of Santa Maria Maggiore, and erected the principal front, which is wretched. His palaces, however, are better: the Corsini is very imposing, and the Palazzo della Consulta, on the Quirinal, is one of the best proportioned and least erratic designs of the last two centuries. So much can scarcely be said for the Fountain of Trevi, designed by the Roman Salvi. The best monument executed in the latter half of the century was the suite of halls built by the architects Simonetti and Camporesi in the Vatican, to receive the Pio-Clementine Museum.

In the north, early in this age, Turin received many buildings little above the taste of the day, from the Sicilian Ivara or Giuvara, whose principal work, the sepulchral church on the neighbouring hill of the Superga, is extremely rich, but owes its fame to its picturesque site and its destination. Ivara was the first master of Louis Van Witel, usually called Vanvitelli, an Italian of Dutch parentage (1700—1778). This architect enjoyed a great, and not undeserved reputation. His transformation of Buonarroti's Carthusian church of the Angeli, in Rome, into its present shape, was his worst deed, but perhaps was not wholly his. The greater number of his monuments are at Naples, where his best church is the Annunziata; and his Neapolitan Palace of Caserta, commenced in 1752, was the most extensive undertaking of the time. The dimensions of this pile are huge; and though its external fronts are chargeable with flatness,

the four inner courts are extremely good, and the staircases and other internal arrangements excellent. The building may challenge a comparison in its general effect with most modern edifices; and the ranges of lofty aqueducts which supply the mansion and its gardens, were worthy of better times and of a nobler use.*

When we emerged from the wilderness of the middle ages, Italian history presented to us a scene of tumultuous agitation. The mighty river soon subsided into gloomy stillness; but now again its waters leap and sparkle, approaching a precipice over which they will be hurled with headlong force.

Neither in moral worth nor in energy of purpose had the character of the nation yet undergone improvement; but a regeneration of intellect had unequivocally begun, heralding changes universal and immense. For Italy, as for every other civilized country, a new era opened with the dawn of the French Revolution.

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* Dimensions: Length of the rectangle, 731 feet; breadth 569; height, 106: Length of each of the four inner courts, 244 feet: breadth, 162: Height of central pavilion, 190 feet.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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